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PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE.



PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE:

ITS MOTIVE, ITS DETAIL,

AND

ITS SUPPORT.

BY

THE REV. ALEXANDER DALLAS, M. A.

**CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER,
AND RECTOR OF WONSTON, HANTS.**

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INTRODUCTION.

THE object of the following Work is to shew the developement of the principle of church-membership, in its practical bearing upon pastoral duties. It has appeared to the Author, that a simple application of the rules by which the Church professes to be kept in order is not only practicable, when administered with prudent consideration, and with persevering impartiality, but that it is a most efficient means of cultivating the growth of spirituality amongst a flock. He has long conceived that the ground upon which Church privileges are afforded has been very commonly mistaken; and that, while some, in consequence of that mistake, depreciate and neglect the advantages of union with the visible church; others, from the same cause, estimate those advantages at a value which overpasses, and lays aside, the spiritual benefits which it is their main purpose to convey. The supposition that the Church gives her members a warrant for believing themselves to be spiritual children of God *upon her responsibility or authority* cannot justly be drawn from any of her acts or statements. The notion that she does give this authority has been the cause, why those who disapprove of such a course have thought lightly of her; and why those who approve of it have fallen into the sad errors which tend to satisfy the mind with ritual religion. The principle upon which the CHURCH OF ENGLAND acts in this respect is to

exhibit a clear statement of gospel truth, and to propose to every one a distinct acknowledgment of that truth as a pledge that they will conform to it in practice. She binds all who are willing to make this acknowledgment in her sacramental bonds; and she puts into their mouths a scriptural profession, framed according to such a spiritual standard, that all persons who make that profession in sincerity and truth, must be under divine influence, and therefore members of the true church. But the responsibility for the truth of this profession, and for the sincerity with which it is made, is laid, in each case, entirely upon the individual member who makes it. In charity she believes it to be true, until gross and scandalous inconsistency forces her to assume its hypocrisy; and upon this assumption, to cut off the hypocrite. But while her charity is large, her careful prudence is no less; and this induces her, upon every occasion of communion, to warn her members, that each is answerable for the reality of his own profession; and that the Church, as a body, is answerable for no one. Into the hands of her ministers she places the important duty of carrying out this principle in their pastoral charges. She makes certain rules, and she takes an oath of her clergy that they will correctly administer them. While preaching the gospel of salvation to his flock, the clergyman's part in the arrangement of means appointed by the Church consists in combining a strict enforcement of these rules, with a diligent and faithful declaration of the personal responsibility of each member.

It has been the Author's earnest desire, and constant endeavour, during a ministry of many years, twelve of which have been in the same parish, to carry out this principle into action; gradually introducing the Church's rules of discipline as the people were able to bear them; and carefully guarding against any step which could not be fully justified by ecclesiastical requirements. While thus using the ma-

chinery of the Church as a means of enforcing the necessity of spiritual religion according to her own elevated standard, as large a measure of success has resulted, as, under all circumstances, could have been anticipated. While feeling much thankfulness for the Almighty mercy of Him who has been pleased, by his divine assistance, to grant the portion of success vouchsafed, the Author has for some time been disposed to consider the propriety of making public the details of this endeavour, in order that his brother clergymen might take into consideration, how far a similar mode of proceeding may be applicable to their several flocks.

With this view, a work had been for some years in preparation, systematically explaining the mode which has been adopted of bringing into action the several steps in church-discipline, as they have been gradually brought forward upon the principle above stated. Such a work required mature deliberation, and a patient waiting for the result of many experiments. In the course of the delay thus occasioned, several things occurred to prove the difficulty of making such a book an instrument of good, without at the same time running a great risk of inflicting material injury upon that portion of the Church amongst whom the experiment had been tried. It was found to be impossible to make the work complete, without imparting to the reader such an intimate acquaintance with the private motives and opinions that guided the clergyman in choosing his opportunity for each particular step, as must necessarily convey much personality of application, for praise and for blame, to the many minds who are acquainted with the locality of the parish. A great evil would thus be likely to result to that dear flock which has been bound in closer bands of affection to the heart of the minister by every progressive gradation in this system. The Author could not make up his mind at such a cost to impart a knowledge of the success to those who might profit

by it elsewhere; and therefore, all thought of publishing the work was abandoned.

This point was fully decided in his mind, when the Author happened to be present at an interesting meeting, where about four hundred clergymen were assembled, in Dublin, in the Spring of 1840. As parochial ministrations formed part of the subject brought forward upon that occasion, some details were given of the effect of the system of church-discipline acted upon in the parish in question. These produced many enquiries, and seemed to excite much interest in the minds of the clergy then present. The subject of intercessory prayer on behalf of ministers, and of the great advantage of union of purpose in private prayer for that object on the part of the friends of ministers, was brought also under consideration: and as a communication was promised to the clergy respecting this point, it became the occasion of a Letter, which was printed and privately circulated amongst them. This Letter contains a concise statement of the principles upon which the Author has endeavoured to act. It is here subjoined.—

To the Reverend, the Clergymen of the CHURCH OF IRELAND, who were assembled in Dublin at the Clerical Meetings, on the Mornings of the 7th and 8th of April, 1840.

BELoved FATHERS AND BRETHREN IN THE LORD.

I desire to return thanks to Almighty God, who by His providence permitted, and by His grace enabled me to enjoy the blessing of Christian intercourse with you on the occasions of our recent meetings. May every such occasion tend to His glory in our own edification, and in the furtherance of that ministry which we have received of Him.

It rejoiced my heart that the subjects upon which I was called upon to address you awakened so lively an interest. As many of you expressed a desire to be made acquainted

with the contents of the little book to which I had then occasion to allude, I joyfully accede to that desire; and in brotherly confidence transmit you a copy of the book of the Wonston Union for private prayer, though you will see from its contents that it was not intended for general publication. It is forwarded to you with fervent prayer, that your consideration of this subject may lead you so to apply to your own circumstances the principle there set forth, that it may, by God's mercy, be made a channel of as great and greater blessings to your ministries as, by that same mercy, it has brought upon mine.

In sending you this little book, perhaps I may be permitted very succinctly to recall to your minds, the two points, which I endeavoured to explain when speaking to you at our meeting; in order that, in your recollection of the details which were illicit by your questions, and which must always be different under different circumstances, you may be able with greater facility to recur to the general principles which are susceptible of application in every ministry.

I. The first point to which I called your attention, was the adoption of a *healthy principle of order*, in the endeavour to be made the instruments of effectually gathering to Christ the souls committed to our charge. I say, a *healthy* principle of order, because this is a point of peculiar danger at this moment in our Church. A snare had long been spread for us by our subtle enemy, leading us to injure our means of usefulness, through a *depreciation* of order in our ministrations: as our eyes have been opening to see this danger, he has, with equal subtilty, cast his snare on the other side of our ministerial path; and Satan is now temptingly drawing us to an *idolatry* of order, equally, if not more, injurious to our spiritual usefulness.

By the former device, many earnest clergymen were placed

in the false position of seeming to concur with persons professedly dissenters from our Church; and by the more recent device, the same class of ministers are placed in the equally false position of seeming to concur with persons who, while they profess the highest church principles, really dissent from our reformed Protestant Church; and that too, in matters of infinitely greater importance than the points of difference between the united Church of England and Ireland and most of the openly professing dissenters. A calm and unprejudiced comparison of the Articles of our Church with the doctrines set forth in the "Tracts for the Times" will fully justify this remark; and shew that the present attempt to *reform afresh* our Church, and to conform it to the model of the already corrupted ante-Nicene church, is made by persons who dissent in essential doctrines from the United Church of England and Ireland. This attempt is made, not under the banner of the cross; but the watchword which on this standard surmounts the motto "*in hoc signo vinces*" is ORDER: and therefore, lest I should be misunderstood in drawing your attention to the important principle of real *order* in our ministrations, I have called it a *healthy* principle of order; as referring to that just and wise carrying out (as far as may be) of the discipline, as well as the doctrines of our Church, which is diametrically opposed to the diseased and disproportioned notion of order that makes an idolatry of means and outward arrangement neutralize the great purpose and object of our ministry—a notion which fraudulently endows a fatal *disorder* with the fair properties of healthy order, just as the Romanists worship a wafer because they call it Christ.

It has been supposed, that, under the present circumstances of our United Church, it is impossible to realize any thing like discipline amongst our congregations. This might be true, if by "discipline" be intended a complete system of arrangement and order perfect in all its parts: but while

it would be vain to expect such a state of things (which probably never has been attained in any portion of the church since the apostolic days) a much nearer approach may be made to that point than is usually imagined, without asking for any other power to be given to the ministers than that which, even in the present state of the church, is placed in their hands; provided only that a wise and forbearing discretion be exercised in attempting to restore the application of those rules which have been disused. The principle by which such a discretion should be guided appears to be, that a careful and patient instruction on each portion of the subject should precede the manifestation of an intention to act upon that particular rule, which, having been disused, is meant to be restored; so as to create a current of public opinion in the congregation, upon the tide of which the minister may launch his bark of authority, seeming to draw after him that general feeling, which in fact supports him and shapes his course.

This notion as to the impossibility of acting out the system of the Church's order appears to be connected with a misapprehension of the principle of church-membership: a misapprehension producing, on the one hand, the error by which a clergyman endeavours to select a church from amongst his parishioners, *according to his own judgment of their spiritual condition* (and in this case he finds himself unable to apply the rules of the Church); and on the other hand, the error by which a clergyman supposes that every professing member is *warranted by the church* to consider himself safe (and in this case he finds no occasion for applying the rules of the Church). The Church does not suppose, nor in any way declare, that all persons who belong to her are safe; but on the contrary, she does declare that "in the visible Church, the evil is ever mingled with the good." (Art. xxvi.) She takes the ground laid out for her by our Lord in the parables of the wheat and the tares, and the drag-net (Matt. xiii. 24 &c. 47

3c). She wishes all to be wheat; but she knows there is false wheat (*zizan*) amongst the true; and not being able to discern in every case between the true and the false, she lets both grow together till the harvest. In the mean time, however, she does all that scripturally she dare do, to prevent the increase of the tares, and to keep the field clean. She raises a standard of true doctrine, and of high spirituality of feeling—she applies this standard to the conscience of every member—she refuses to be answerable for any individual, but calls upon each to answer for himself, and upon the faith of his answer, casts all the responsibility of his state upon his own shoulders. It is this point where the misapprehension exists—the point of *responsibility*. If the Church be so administered that the people are led to suppose that by putting a spiritual profession in their mouths, the Church considers them to be spiritual Christians, they will imperceptibly perhaps, but certainly, take their christianity upon the *responsibility* of the Church. Or if, on the other hand, the Church be so administered that an outward distinction is made according to the opinion of the minister; the few people who are approved will imperceptibly also, but surely, rest their confidence as to their spiritual state, very much upon the judgment of their minister, and so in fact make him bear the *responsibility*. Whenever the human heart can deceive itself by casting any portion of the responsibility for establishing a christian character upon another party than itself, then lukewarmness, coldness, or deadness will be the result, according to the proportion of responsibility assigned over secretly by the heart. The Romanist who purchases absolution from his church, the formalist who rests his hopes upon a mistaken view of baptismal benefits, and the separatist who joins an imaginary pure church, selected according to private opinion concerning the spiritual state of each member—these differ but in degree on this point, they all place the

responsibility for their spiritual state upon other than their own consciences and hearts. The excellence of our united Church, as a society of Christians, consists mainly in this : that while she makes every member profess a high standard, she throws the *responsibility* regarding the real state of each entirely upon himself. " Judge therefore yourselves, brethren" is the expressed condensation of the essential characteristic pervading all her services. She takes a pledge at baptism—she requires that pledge to be personally redeemed at confirmation—she insists upon continued communion, and upon each occasion urges renewed self-examination. The presumed sincerity of these is the foundation for affording all the benefits, privileges, and hopes, with which she so largely comforts her members. Take away the foundation, and the superstructure has no place. In this sense, all our church privileges may be said to be conditional ; the condition being, that the statements made upon every occasion of worship by the members are not only sincerely spoken, but are also true in themselves ; the real value of the privileges is thus commensurate with the real value of the statements made by each ; and the Church refuses to be *responsible* for this, but casts the whole *responsibility* upon the individual member.

A clear understanding of this is the key which will open the Church's rules and discipline, and enable us to apply them to use. A clear setting forth of this (in due subordination to the essential point of our preaching—Christ and Him crucified—the everlasting Gospel) is the key to every member's heart, to expose its good or its bad treasure to his own eyes. In proportion to the spiritual indolence and death which results from allowing the people to find an external responsibility for their Christianity, will be also the spiritual activity and life which will result from a persevering patience in casting the responsibility upon themselves. Let a clergy-

man, while preaching the Gospel, distinctly and unceasingly maintain, that no man can or may judge of another's spiritual state; but that every member of the Church as such judges himself to be what the Gospel would make him, and solemnly declares his faith and his feelings to be in accordance with this or that particular point which happens to be the subject of instruction at the time; let it be further maintained, that he is a member of the Church *because of that declaration*; that if it be false, he is a false member, and upon stating his true feelings would cut himself off from communion with the Church:—such a course, patiently and wisely persevered in, would so cast his hearers upon themselves, that few, very few, would be uninfluenced in one way or in another. They would be excited to a lively interest in spiritual things, by personally marking the difference between the standard of the Church (made their own by their declarations) and the real level of their hearts—they would either grieve over their deficiency, and be excited onward in their spiritual race—or, they would perceive their hypocrisy, and *separate themselves*, so long as they remained really at variance from the profession which the Church forces them to make. This is precisely what the Church desires to effect—a voluntary separation of unbelievers from believers; a real classification worked by the Holy Spirit acting upon the conscience, and not an external classification wrought by the judgment of man. While earnestly striving to gather Christ's sheep through the preaching of the Cross, and so to add to the Church daily such as shall be saved, let a minister keep constantly in view this principle, laid down for him by authority; disclaiming once and again on his own part all pretension to judge the people concerning their spiritual state—deprecating strongly such pretensions in others—but calling upon each to judge himself; and bringing out plainly, and with uncompromising boldness, the declared result of the judgment

of each concerning himself in the professions he is continually making, or in the refusal to make such professions, which non-communicants allow to be understood. If a clergyman pursued such a course, he would find that the fruits of his ministry would be apparent, first in the inquiring state of his people; then perhaps in the opposition of many; but in every step there would be *signs of life*; and in the end, a manifestation of God's blessing upon the means, producing a body of spiritual believers, who would be ready to receive the application of the Church's regulations, the use of which would be felt to be absolutely necessary, and would react by confirming and increasing the spiritual blessing amongst the flock. The parishioners having *divided themselves* into communicants and non-communicants, a line might be drawn in pulpit addresses perfectly free from personal offence, and yet effectually separating the worldly from the spiritual; and drawing forth even the babes in Christ to acknowledge Him. The Church, (properly so called, consisting of the communicants alone) might be closely sifted by the application of the principle of responsibility to their consciences, so as to make it almost impossible for inconsistent members to continue. A sufficient body of members being collected together, their services might be required exclusively as sponsors for baptized infants; and those who took this office might be led to make it an efficient one in helping the working of the Sunday and Daily Schools upon their godchildren. New communicants being required to "signify their names to the curate" before coming, might be affectionately warned or encouraged: leaving always the responsibility of joining or withdrawing entirely with themselves: while rare cases of notoriously evil living in communicants would be met without difficulty by private warnings not to appear at the Table, in carrying out which the minister would be supported by the tendency of public opinion in the parish.

If I appear, my beloved brethren, to have enlarged upon this point, it is because all the details which interested you in my address may be traced to the application of this principle during the ministration of eleven years in one place. But I will close the subject now, by reminding you of the remark with which I introduced it in speaking then. There are two ways of acquiring a fortune in this world. A man may become rich in one day by the bequest of some affluent friend or relation ;—another man, by the patient exercise of industrious habits through a course of years, may gather together a fund which may make him as rich as the former. The riches we are seeking, my beloved brethren, are the souls of our people for our hire—those precious jewels of Christ to present to Him who gives us the power to gather them. It may happen that God may please in His great goodness to produce a sudden and striking awakening in a particular flock (such as is called a revival). Praise and glory be to His Name when He thus puts forth His power. But this is not the general mode of His grace in increasing his Church, as it is not the general mode of His providential dealings to cast all the lot into a man's lap at one throw; and as it would be unwise for any man to arrange his worldly expectations upon the hope of an accidental prize, so I cannot help thinking that *expectations* of great gatherings of souls to Christ suddenly, upon special occasions, are at least less wise than a large anticipation of a gradual blessing upon the diligent use of the appointed means put forth in a healthy exercise of the principle of order. Seasons of wonderful and sudden blessedness have refreshed the Church again and again, from the day of Pentecost to the present hour : but in this, as in every thing, is seen God's sovereign election. He sends an April cloud pregnant with fruitfulness across a thirsty land, and He directs its course as He wills. The parched earth of one field has no just cause of complaint, that it cannot

smile with the greenness that tracks the cloud in the path which God's providence marked out for it: nor may any of us dare to repine because no sudden shower of grace has given to our portion of the Church a pentecostal life. We may joy with the joy of a brother, to whom such a blessing has been vouchsafed; but while we rejoice in the forward hopefulness of his spiritual field, if we diligently tend our own, using all the helps that lie within our reach, we shall find that the unobserved nightly dews will so moisten our furrows, that when the harvest shall have come, our sheaves shall be as large as those of our brother, whose heart had at one time been more specially gladdened for a moment.

II. The second point to which I would recall your particular attention is that which is immediately connected with the enclosed book. We are all of us well aware of the importance of PRAYER; doubtless we have all of us experienced again and again the faithfulness of God's promises to *united* prayer. The expectation of a blessing upon union in prayer is, however, *practically* too much restricted in our minds to the exercise of prayer by those who are assembled together in bodily presence. Of the great blessing to be expected from such united exercises no sincere and intelligent member of our Church can have a doubt. But it may be a question whether just and faithful expectations are commonly entertained of the result of spiritual union and agreement between Christians in the subjects of our secret, and, in a bodily sense, separate supplications; at least, whether they are sufficiently general or decided to lead us to exercise the privilege with any thing like its scriptural power. The special point then is this:—that any number of Christians, agreeing as touching what they shall ask on earth, may determine to assemble in spirit before the throne of grace, continually, or at stated periods; earnestly reminding God of his promises, and giving him no rest until he fulfil them. And that this manner of

uniting in prayer, in obedience to the command "pray one for another," is sealed with as sure warrant of success as that of assembling in bodily presence; while it is less liable to hindrance from human infirmity—more productive of earnest importunity—more expansive—and more attainable.

The principle upon which this depends may be traced to the same source as that already stated. The responsibility of action is thrown upon each individual in this case, as the responsibility of judgment is in the former. Hence a judicious selection of associates, upon the sincerity of whose expressed intention confidence may be placed, secures, humanly speaking, a reality of agreement and of spiritual union, which is rarely to be attained in the choicest *assembly* of Christians. The distressing variations of thought, and distractions of mind, that human infirmity so constantly produces in assemblies for prayer, where every heart must necessarily be led along the line of one and the same expressed statement, have no place when the mode of bringing before the throne of grace the desire for one and the same object is left to the feeling of each: and we may dare to hope that, upon such occasions, "he that searcheth the hearts," (as he declares with reference to this very point, Rom. viii. 26, 27,) hears the chorus of supplication, tuned more perfectly in heart-harmony, according to the subject-melody carefully prepared by the previous concurrent and deliberate consent of the whole.

For the same reason, a *union in separation*, so to speak, is productive of importunity. The supplicant is not allowed to remain in the condition of one who only says *amen* to the uttered petition. The natural indolence of our hearts is apt to take advantage of the impetus given by a crowd, to allow ourselves to be carried onward to the throne of grace, rather than to put forth the energies of our souls in personal efforts. But a sincere man, having stated an honest intention to

bring a certain subject before God in private prayer, honestly endeavours to fulfil that intention. He is thereby aroused to individual efforts ; he has not the temptation to think that others around him are carrying him on, whether he flag in his walk or not ; he is sensible that, unless he pray at the appointed season, it is as if he had been absent from a particular assembly of Christians ; and because absent, therefore in no wise a partaker in their worship. This leads him to strive personally to attain a prayerful state of mind upon each occasion of appointed spiritual union ; and who can ever honestly strive thus without feeling the blessed effect of his striving ; and without being led to increased importunity in supplication ?

Such an application of the promises to agreement in prayer is also more expansive, for it makes no limitations of number necessary : any two may thus unite, though they be placed at the opposite ends of the earth : and it is more attainable, because it requires no adaptation of circumstances suitable to the convenience of all parties.

Let it, however, be distinctly understood that such private spiritual union must always be in due subordination to the plain duty of public prayer, for which it can never be placed as a substitute. As an accessory it is invaluable ; it carries out in private the impulse sought to be obtained in our public services. If we were to depend upon our public services *alone*, we should be living like the whales, which do but take a breath at intervals ; and not like men who require the *continual* inhaling of the air of heaven. The Church may be said to give to her members a public lesson concerning prayer, which she requires them to go forth and learn in private ; and every mutual agreement amongst some to bring their supplications to the throne of grace, for the same object, at the same time, so as to acquire the confidence of assured union, is a brotherly means of helping each other in learn-

ing the Church's lesson more perfectly. Those who profit most by such assistance, will always be found to be those who, at the same time, are "not forsaking the assembling of themselves together."

It has been upon the foundation of this principle that the Wonston Private-Prayer Union has been formed; and the result has been a degree of success which calls for enlarged gratitude to the Giver of every good gift—the Author and Finisher of every blessing, in its means and in its end. To this, as to a spiritual instrumentality, may be attributed that measure of success of which you have heard some of the details. The construction of the machinery is this: the minister engaged the interest of some of his Christian friends (to whom he could lay open freely his ministerial and personal wants) in behalf of himself and his flock; calling forth from them the expression of a *present serious intention*, to bring those wants before the throne of grace in private prayer, at least once a month, on the morning of the first Sunday in the month, if enabled so to do; if not, as soon after as circumstances permitted. To the wants of himself and of his parish, each member of the union agrees to add earnest supplication for the whole of the members, not individually, but as a body. The members need not necessarily know each other, except where circumstances make such knowledge desirable. This seems the wisest plan; as, in some cases, personal infirmity might lead one member to take a low estimate of the spiritual state of some other; and so the confidence as to the prayerfulness of the whole might be weakened. It is enough that each member, being personally interested in the minister, who may be called the centre of the union, confides in his judgment for the selection of the other members, as persons really prayerful in spirit, and similarly interested with themselves. This is a sufficient warrant for the exercise of a brotherly love in prayer for each

other. In return for this kind and Christian exercise of brotherly love, the minister expresses, on his part, a *present serious intention*, to bring *each* of the members before the throne of grace, as far as he is able, and as his knowledge of their circumstances permits. No Christian can be thus engaged without finding his love for the brethren increased, and his interest concerning them deepened; and thus an enlargement of Christian union is produced, manifestly realizing the promise, "to him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundance."

To engage the consciences of a number of Christians in such a work requires very tender management. The bondage of a distinct pledge in the form of a promise will prove too heavy for many of the children of God: the link of union, therefore, is attached to each in such a manner as leaves a perfect freedom from such bondage. The expression of a *present serious intention* is all that is required, which operates upon an honest Christian in a more prevailing way than any bond of promise; while it leaves room for the contingences of unavoidable hindrances, without wounding the conscience. Such a link has been found practically to effect its purpose, as could be testified by each of the 178 members who now form the Wonston Private-Prayer Union: and the result of much earnest enquiry amongst them individually proves, that the blessing gathered in the work to the soul of each, in answer to the prayers of the whole, leaves no risk that the appointed occasions should be carelessly neglected: but, on the contrary, ensures the substantial fulfilment of the serious intention, originally expressed on joining the Union.

Why should not each and every one of you, my beloved brethren, construct a similar machinery, adapted to his own ministry? Each of you have those ties which draw forth the personal affections of the heart; and amongst your kindred and special friends, each must surely be able to number some

at least (more or less in number) who have received that Holy Spirit that helpeth their infirmities, and teaches them what they should pray for as they ought. If each one of you were to appeal to these affections, and tie them up into the knot of a Private-Prayer Union, what a power of grace might be expected to be poured forth on your ministrations ! what real revivals of religion might be anticipated in your parishes ! what enlargement of Christian love in the whole Church ! "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars in heaven." The turning of many to righteousness can only be by God's blessing on the means employed : by the simple yet blessed means now suggested, not only may many be turned to righteousness, but many may also, in some sort, be afforded a share in the instrumentality, and therefore in the blessing. If each of you were to form such a Union of spiritual helpers by prayer, the heart full of faith might look by anticipation upon the arc of the glorified heavens in the coming consummation, and trace out each Union as a separate constellation of bright stars, the figure of which shall be characterized by the name of the minister, whose watchmen before the throne of grace they were when upon earth.

In commending you, and your great work, with sympathizing affection to the blessing of God, I earnestly entreat that when you are remembering in prayer the ministers of Christ's church, you will occasionally plead for me, as for one greatly needing the special mercy of God, and greatly valuing the kindness which prompts to prayer for me. I feel that our short but interesting intercourse has stored up remembrances in my heart which will find their expression in prayer for you ; and it is this feeling which justifies me to myself in asking for yours in return.

I remain,

Your affectionate brother in Christ.

The circulation of this Letter produced many applications for further details, and it was evident that a satisfactory reply to them could only be given by a fuller statement, than could possibly be condensed into a letter. Other considerations joined with this to induce the Author to re-examine his former plan. It had happened that circumstances had afforded him the use of a printing press, by which a communication between himself and his people had been greatly facilitated; by this means he has distributed through the parish many important statements upon particular occasions; and has made public such accounts of the progress of the system as it was useful for the people to be acquainted with. Upon examining these it appears, that they contain upon the whole such a portion of necessary information on the subject, as will suffice to convey a view of the details of the system, sufficient to lead the mind of any clergyman to understand the arrangements, and enable him to supply, by inference, all that may be wanting to adapt the same principle to the circumstances of his own ministry, should he desire so to do. As the communications made in these papers have always been carefully weighed, previous to being made public in the parish, there can be no risk of local inconvenience in extending their publication. It has therefore been determined to publish a selection from these papers, arranged in such order as will be calculated to shew the progress made under this system of pastoral superintendence.

In order, however, to exhibit at large the spiritual and scriptural motives, of which these details ought to be the result; the Author chose a passage of Scripture, upon which he delivered a course of instruction to his own people, amongst whom the principles thus set forth, had been acted upon for so many years. The passage is 1 Cor. iii. 5—15, in explaining which, he laid open the minister's motives, as well as the personal responsibility of the people. The course con-

sisted of Six Lectures, which, being prepared with much thoughtful consideration, were delivered extemporaneously as far as the language is concerned. These Lectures were taken down in short hand as they were delivered, and they are now published as the FIRST PART of the present Work, in order to set forth—THE MOTIVES OF PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE.

The papers already referred to are arranged as the SECOND PART of the Work; exhibiting, THE DETAIL OF PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE. In examining these documents it may probably occur to the mind, that considerable labour must be required to be able to make many of the numerical statements they contain. It is quite true that several account books must be regularly kept; for which purpose a constant attention is requisite; but this can hardly be considered a difficulty of very great importance; as system and order in the machinery of such accounts reduces the labour to a matter of very small moment. It is to be deplored that, upon this point, there seems to be a general deficiency in the notions entertained with respect to the management of a parochial charge. An exact system of regular accounts is one of the most powerful engines by which success is ensured in all secular occupations. The lawyer and the medical man find that their whole time is occupied in obtaining the object for which they enter into their professions; and, for the sake of economy of time, they are constrained to systematize their engagements, if they would attain to professional success. The character, and even professional existence of the merchant, of whatever class or degree, depend upon the observance of system and order in his plans and accounts. But the importance of system to attain success is most clearly exhibited in the military profession; in which the ratio of efficiency is precisely according to the habitual attention to order. Exact periodical statements and returns bring to light every defect; the peremptory duty of making these returns

keeps the officer constantly on the alert ; enables him to detect the first departure from regularity ; and to apply the immediate remedy. And this is the profession which is taken in the word of God, to illustrate the condition of the Church at large, and of its ministers more especially.

The great variety of forms and arranged blank books suitable to every profession which are kept for sale, as of ordinary use, present an unaccountable contrast to the solitary "*Speculum gregis*," which is prepared for the use of clergymen ; and this affords strong proof that detailed accounts connected with the pastoral charge are of rare occurrence ; and yet there is no object in which the energies of the mind can be engaged where greater benefit will be likely to result from minute and systematic registrations, relating to those points in which the progress of the great work can be watched and marked. This is evident from the great distinction which exists between the profession of a minister of Christ, and every other profession in the world. While the knowledge of that distinction ought to excite the clergy to a more zealous application of every talent and power to the vast object in view, it is unfortunately too often found to act, either secretly or openly, as a motive for relaxation in the exertions necessary for the establishment of discipline and order.

The object to be obtained by every other profession is temporary, worldly, and by an immense distance secondary to that which is placed before the ministers of the gospel. Such a secondary object is tangible ; and it may be almost certainly predicted that success will follow upon the diligent exercise of certain means. The object placed before the minister of the gospel is eternal ; his fruits are not harvested in this world ; and, as the conversion of each soul is the distinct work of the Holy Ghost, it cannot be said of the most zealous ministrations that they will certainly produce the end de-

sired. Hence, there creeps into the mind, an unavowed but secretly admitted notion, that, as with God it is nothing "to conquer by many or by few," so few and irregular means may be instrumentally made no less successful than the application of a larger and more systematic scheme of ministrations. This is an enervating thought, which soothes our natural sloth into a dreamy and delusive slumber. The fact is, that, though God does often bear witness to the power of his own Word, by making it the instrument of salvation under circumstances little conducive to its success, yet the large requirements of the apostolic instructions to ministers contain in themselves a command to make the most diligent use of the fullest system of instrumentality that can be devised : and the promises connected with those injunctions authorise the expectation, that wisdom will be given for arranging, and power for executing the best ordered scheme that can be conceived. Here then will apply the proverb "duty is ours, events are God's;" and it is commonly found that God vouchsafes a larger measure of success where a more earnest attempt is made to extend the ministrations of the gospel, systematically, over the whole field to which the labourer is appointed.

There is scarcely any thing which tends to give more influence for good to a clergyman than a conviction, imperceptibly forced upon the minds of his parishioners, that he takes minute account of those things relating to them in which he may legitimately interfere. In this point of view, the statements contained in the papers which form the second part of this Work have been so useful as fully to compensate for the trouble required to make them correctly.

The second subject introduced into the Letter to the Irish clergy is one which occupies too important a place in the whole system to be passed over without further notice. The promises made in the word of God to intercessory prayer are

of the very largest kind; and it would appear, that, in the arrangement of means by which the Divine Love works His purposes towards His people, He has condescended to employ the kindly affections of the heart of one, to draw down instrumentally a blessing upon the soul of another. While the Scriptures assuredly contain sufficient ground to warrant this statement, it is greatly to be feared that the lingering unbelief of our hearts very materially interrupts the operation of this part of God's spiritual machinery. When a pastor is comforted and supported by the conviction that the hearts of many Christian friends are drawn forth with a lively interest in secret prayer for a blessing upon his ministry, he is comforted under the discouragements and strengthened for the labour of his work by a peculiar energy. It is with heartfelt gratitude, that the Author acknowledges the very great assistance which he has derived from such a conviction with reference to an unusual number of praying friends; and he has no hesitation in ascribing to these prayers instrumentally the blessing vouchsafed in his parish, by calling forth, in the first place directly, the answer from Him who gave the impulse to pray; and by producing, in the second place indirectly, that confident feeling in himself, by which he has been supported in carrying out the plans thus commended to the merciful direction of God. The view of this subject set forth in the Letter to the Irish clergy requires that the steps taken to ensure union and regularity upon this point should be included in the present attempt to develope the whole system; and therefore a **THIRD PART** is added to this Work, in order to present the reader with some account of **THE SUPPORT OF PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE**. This will contain a transcript of the little book referred to in the Letter; together with some extracts from several addresses which have been sent to the members of the Prayer Union; and a short reference to other attempts made to promote the object in view. These

are given as specimens by which any clergyman may arrange for himself such a systematic combination amongst his immediate friends, as may secure to him advantages, both direct and indirect, similar to those which have contributed to bring down a blessing already, and have been the means of so much encouraging support.

In concluding this Introduction, the Author submits the Work especially to the consideration of his brethren in the ministry, with an earnest and prayerful desire that it may please God to make use even of this imperfect attempt for the promotion of His own glory, and for the benefit of His church.

PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE.

PART I.

ITS MOTIVE,

SET FORTH IN A COURSE OF LECTURES

On 1 Corinthians iii. 5—15.

LECTURE I.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 5, 6.

Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

I HAVE lately sent round to every one of your houses a short Account,* which is proposed to be the first of a continued series of monthly Accounts concerning the Church in this parish. The motives by which I have been induced to take this step are such as have been deeply considered, and the step itself is of the most serious importance. It has long been well weighed, and therefore it may be said to be the fruit of much prayerful thought. As I feel this to be no trifling matter, but rather one of great consequence to each of the flock for good or for evil in its results, it is my bounden duty not to leave it among you to be treated lightly; but to endeavour to explain to you the motives by which I am influenced in thus acting; and to call upon you to attend to the Account itself, in order that by God's help you may be enabled to make a personal application of it to the good of your souls.

In bringing before you the Scripture I have read as the Text, it is my object to-day to make this address the beginning of a short course of instruction with reference to that monthly Account. I pray that by the guiding of the Holy Spirit your

* This Account will be found amongst the documents which form the second Part of the Work.

attention may be drawn to the subject. May the Lord be in the midst of us and bless us : may He be with His minister as He specially promised when He said " Lo I am with you alway even to the end of the world : " and may He be with the people, applying the word to their hearts with power. May God for Christ's sake give us the Holy Spirit.

In acting upon the plan which I have thus proposed, it is mainly important to draw your attention very particularly to the relative position in which a minister of Christ stands to the people committed to his charge, and the people to their minister. It is necessary that this position should be rightly and thoroughly understood. You have all been born and educated, brought up, and it may be grown on to a good old age in the constant habit of attending the regular order of a National system of religion. You have known it and have heard it from your infancy ; in short it has become mixed up and entwined in the current of your thoughts. Week after week you hear the sound of the Church-going bell ; you know of the regular appointment of Churchwardens, and of the payment of a small sum of money to defray the necessary expenses of Divine Worship ; and the custom of bringing your children to the font for Baptism, with many other habitual practices which are daily taking place before our eyes, often has the effect of making Church-membership to be considered as a matter of course and of very little real interest. This I say is too often lamentably the case, which makes it the more important that the plain truth of the matter should be laid before you. What is done every day as a customary thing is frequently done without much serious thought—for habit in any thing has a tendency (if not closely watched) to lessen the proper effect upon our minds. To attend upon our Church services without serious thought, and without an understanding of that in which we are engaged, makes those services to be very dangerous to the souls of those who do so ;

therefore, it becomes the minister's duty to strive by every means to rescue his people from such a danger, from such a snare of Satan.

For nearly two thousand years a system of worship has been established in which you have engaged ever since you were born; for nearly two thousand years has this been the case in various parts of the world; the Gospel has been preached, and the same truth has been declared which you have been in the habit of hearing all your life long. For twelve hundred years such has been the case in our own favoured country: and when that system after a time became disturbed, (in consequence of the people's attending to it merely as a matter of habit, and so opening a door for Satan to enter in, and introduce false doctrine and error) it was by a great convulsion that it was restored; a great moral convulsion felt throughout the length and breadth of the land—a convulsion felt in every class of society—a convulsion however which, though terrible to those who saw it, produced the restoration of that system of worship to its original state of purity and truth. For three hundred years has that re-established and purified system—purified at the expense of the blood of our Reformers—gone on unchanged, the same system of truth even to this present day, when we are mercifully permitted to meet in this house, and to partake of the blessing and privileges of that worship.

My brethren, is this true, or is it not? That it is strictly true none can deny: that it is true as a matter of history may be proved by the fact of our being in our present position. But is it a system established and grounded on the eternal truth of God, or is it not? Either it is a system that has gone on deceiving people, grossly deceiving them, young and old, of all countries, and of all classes, generation after generation up to the present day; or else it is a system of eternal truth; of such truth too as must have an effect, an eternal effect, upon the soul of every one who has ever come within

the knowledge of it. If it be a system of truth—of truth based upon the word of God ;—(and here I would pause for a moment to say, that though I am speaking in this way for argument's sake ; yet I declare it to be the very truth of God ; and I warn you that it is the truth, the belief of which involves the safety or loss of your souls. Every soul of the past generations has found it out to be the truth of God—and every soul of the present generation either has already, or will hereafter find it out to be the truth of God. God grant that every one of you may discover this in time. But to return to the argument ;) If it be a system of essential truth, how deeply important must it be that it should be attended to and acted upon as truth ! how utterly foolish to act it out as a mere matter of form and custom, without energy or power or effect !

Oh my brethren, when the mind grasps this great thought, and we become convinced that the services of our Church are a system characterised by the eternal truth of God ;—when I say this conviction takes hold of the mind, there is not a more affecting thing in the world than to see the way in which Satan has prevailed to make people go on in a careless, indifferent mode of using prayers and services which might be the breath of spiritual life in communion with God himself : daily using the most expressive prayers and the most humbling confessions before God without a sense of personal interest in them. My brethren, I have for years past, gradually, but constantly, from time to time as opportunity has served, developed to you the serious responsibility of attending the services of the Church ; and warned you of the danger of neglecting them. My object has been to make you see, that it is not I who tell you what truth is ; but that it is you yourselves who tell God what truth is ; and that it is you who say what you believe, in the services of the Church. It is a fearful thing for any person to go on speaking truth with their lips

—professing a true faith in the public congregation—and yet at the same time to go on living a lie—acting the very contrary to that profession. Can any thing be more terrible? That a poor wretched creature who never heard what truth is, and goes on in evil will be beaten is quite true; but it will be with comparatively few stripes; and not as those who having heard the truth all their lives, and confessed their belief in it with their own mouths, yet go on living as if it were not the truth. Surely such will be beaten with many stripes.

The Church my brethren, is greatly misunderstood, and greatly abused; and that too by many well-intentioned men; because they look to the inconsistent lives of some persons who profess themselves to be her members. They forget that all the Church pretends to do is to make the lips of those who profess to join her communion speak words of truth. The consequence of this is, that the Church must be seen in her services; not the lives of her professing members, but her doctrines must be examined, and her requirements compared with the Scriptures. If any of you had hired a servant, and you afterwards found that sometimes he did what you told him, and sometimes he did what your enemies told him, would you acknowledge that man to be your servant? Would you not take every means to give publicity to the fact that he was not your servant, although you once hired him?

The Church's profession, which every person who joins her is required to make, before he is acknowledged as a member, is scriptural; and is such a profession as every servant of Christ ought to make. But it is the profession which must be examined, and not the opinions of the individual members. There are four classes of persons in every parish. The first Class consists of "the little flock"—the true Christians, in whom the Spirit of God is ruling—working in them, and fitting them for glory. I do not say how many are in this class: I do not say *who* they are. But if it be not the case,

that there are some such, then there is no true member of the Church in that place. Besides these, there are persons who take up the language of the Church, speak as if they were true members, attend upon her services, and externally submit to all her requirements. There is nothing known as regards their lives which is scandalously or notoriously evil. These join in worship with the little flock, and do all that is required outwardly of the real spiritual members. They are persons who may or may not be hypocrites, or self-deceived. This is the second class. And these two classes of persons form the body of the Church. Mark well that these are the only persons whom the Church of England ever acknowledges to be her members. They communicate; they bring their children to baptism; they submit to the regulations of the body. The members of the Church then, consist of these two sorts of people.

Besides these, there is also a third class. They are the persons who do not communicate; but who come and sit and hear: who do not object to the worship, but do not care much about it: it is a matter of little concern to them. They fancy themselves to be Church of England people because they have got the habit of hearing a good deal about the Church, but without understanding or personally applying it. They do not like dissent; not because they think dissent to be wrong, but because it is contrary to their habits: it is what they have not been so familiar with as with the Church. These persons were baptized in their infancy—some of them perhaps confirmed their baptismal vows; but they never joined the Communion—or, if they did, it might have been once, just at the time of confirmation—and they have thought little or nothing about it since. Such persons do not form part of the Church. The door, however, is open to them; and the Church gives her ministers power to receive them whenever they desire to enter. The opportunity is before them, but they

remain out. This is the third Class. And the fourth Class consists of those persons who go on living to the world, enjoying all they can, never caring any thing at all about religion; never thinking about their souls, or God, or Eternity. I was about to say that they are poor unhappy heathens: but no—they are much worse than the heathen. The poor heathen were never baptized—the poor heathen never had the Gospel of Christ preached to them, nor the opportunity of knowing Him. The poor heathen will not have so terrible a condemnation, so deep a place in hell as these.

Now every Parish in England has these four classes of persons in it: they together make the Parish. And every minister of the Church of England is commanded to go and preach to these people; and, as it is set forth in our Ordination service, “to seek for Christ’s sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved, through Christ, for ever.” This is what every minister has sworn he will do.

There is no difficulty at all in declaring the state of the fourth class—they cannot be saved: they must perish—fearful truth! With a mourning heart I must turn to the third class, and declare to you, that if God’s word be true, they cannot be saved: they must perish. And beloved brethren, with still greater mourning and grief of heart, I must state the condition of the second class—they cannot be saved: they too must perish. These are solemn, fearful truths. With joy of heart I turn to the first class; and, praised be God, I can say to them, you shall be saved, every one of you. I cannot tell who they are, nor what their names: Christ knows them all. The Church forbids her ministers to judge at all of the members (the first two classes). The false and the true wheat grow so much alike, the minister cannot tell which is which; and thank God we are not allowed to attempt it. The Church, I say, forbids us to make a distinction

between the first and second classes; the Lord says, "let both grow together till the harvest:" and the Church, echoing the words of the Apostle, says to all and to each of them, "judge yourselves, brethren." But while this is the case, the Church commands us to make a distinction between the two first, and the two last classes.

When tests of admission to the Church, and continuance in it, are put before you, and you refuse to take them, it is then no matter of judging in any one to say, that you will not join the Church, or you will not continue a member: it becomes a plain fact. When the minister puts the test before the people, and they refuse it, it is the people themselves who say this, and not the minister. They say, not indeed with their lips, but practically by their actions, "We will not belong to the Church; we will not confess Christ." The Church commands a great many things for the regulation of the body, but she commands but two as essential to her membership. The Church expects her ministers to warn and admonish those who do not attend Divine worship; and a great many matters of secondary importance are also required; but she only draws the distinction, of who are members and who are not, upon Christ's own directions. He commanded, in Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved;" and again, "This is my blood of the New Testament &c., drink ye all of it." Matt. xxvi. 27, 28. These are Christ's own orders; these are the words of Christ. The Church says, therefore, that no unbaptized person shall be considered as a member; and it follows that no person who, having been baptized in infancy, refuses, when of proper age, to confirm the vows of baptism, or to continue after Confirmation by Communion, is in a state of membership. My brethren, this is no opinion or fancy of mine. It is the command of Christ: it is the requirement of the Church. You have your Bibles and your Prayer-books; look at them

and see. Every minister of the Church of England is sworn to minister to the people according to this principle: and as we have not the power to judge between the first two classes before referred to, it is our duty to put the truth in such a manner before the people that they may be enabled to judge themselves.

When the Lord Jesus Christ shall come again in glory it will be found to be the eternal truth of God, that those who have come to him inwardly by faith and outwardly by profession will be saved. For you will remember both are necessary; as St. Paul says, Romans x. 10, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." And those who have not come to him by faith, what shall I say of them? May the Lord apply the truth to any such who may be here: they will not—they cannot be saved. If this be true what anxiety can be too great for the minister to feel on behalf of his people? While they are sleeping over their danger—while they are passing away from the world daily, the Church brings before them the solemn truths I have referred to; and they themselves repeat these very truths as true: then if the minister let the people go on repeating the most solemn words as true, while by their lives they deny what they so constantly declare with their lips, would you not think him hard-hearted who could shrink from showing them their danger? The world, I know, see no necessity for this; they consider a faithful minister to be a wild enthusiast. But I will tell you what God considers him. He is an honoured instrument of God;—honoured indeed! chosen from amongst his fellow-sinners to be a light set up by God before the people, and entrusted with the commission of Christ: honoured before the angels, who are all the while looking on, and wondering at that which is so little attended to by the people to whom he is sent. I

repeat it, he is an honoured instrument of God. Can you then wonder at his anxiety, seeing that it is a matter of such honour and interest to the minister himself? For God who has been pleased to appoint his instruments to preach his gospel, and to give them power to do the work He sets them about, mercifully promises them a free and a voluntary reward; not a reward of merit, for there is no merit at all in the matter. As St. Paul says, "A dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel." There is no merit in preaching the gospel—no merit in imploring sinners to be reconciled to God. But though there is no merit in this, yet God has graciously been pleased to promise a reward according to the measure of the "little flock" which the minister may be employed to collect and bring to Christ out of the world that lieth in wickedness; and these shall form his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus. This reward, however, will not be given if there be no jewels to put into his crown. This is marvellous, my brethren; but it is true. Marvellous! that while the minister must do that as a duty which Christ commands, yet that his own interest should be so greatly and so gloriously involved in it.

With these two motives then to influence him, how is it possible that any minister can be satisfied so long as any of his people keep themselves from Christ, and remain out of his Church? how is it possible that we can neglect to use the little power which Christ has given to us, and which the Church has put into our hands?

As I have shewn you already, the Lord and the Church forbid the minister to judge as to the difference between those that are within—the two first classes of persons in every parish: but the Church places in the minister's power one means of producing a distinction; that is, to urge the people to a diligent spirit of self-examination:—to call

upon each member to examine and judge himself, and to cast the responsibility of his real state before God entirely upon himself. The Minister cannot draw the line between the first two classes; but it is an utter mistake and contrary to truth—an utter mistake and contrary to plain common sense to suppose that every person in a parish is a member of the Church, whether they join her Communion or not: and it is also an utter mistake to suppose that every person who does communicate is a true spiritual member. In the case of those who do not join the Communion, the minister need not say any thing, for the individuals say for themselves that they will not belong to the Church: and in the other case he cannot say any thing, for unless we see plain open sin, and that it brings a scandal upon the Church, the minister has no power to interfere. While this is the case, it is a truth which cannot be too often or too plainly put before you, that none but the true members, the little flock will be saved after all. Therefore, my dear friends, there cannot be a greater kindness to you than to use every means to put you in the position of making you judge yourselves, and see where you are in this important concern, and how you stand in the Church. If your Church-membership be a matter to be seen by men only, then you may have your reward here; but you will not be saved in the day of the Lord. If you rest on the opinion of man at all, whoever the man may be, whether what your neighbours may say of you, or your minister, for the reality of your religion, you may have your reward; men may speak well of you; they may judge you to be religious; but you will not be saved in the day of the Lord. You may be very exact in your outward behaviour, and very regular in your attendance upon ordinances; or you may be less exact; this does not make the real difference: if your heart be not renewed by the Holy Spirit, you are not one

of God's people. When you come to church it must not be merely because it is a Sunday duty; nor to the Communion merely because the Church expects it of you: but it must be because you know how Christ has loved you, and because you know the difference between the Church and the world that lieth in wickedness. Yes, lieth in wickedness (or in the wicked one); however the world may appear to you in its painted and varnished character of amiableness and kind-heartedness, which after all is only like the tiring of Jezebel, or like the whited sepulchres, which appear beautiful outwardly, but are inwardly full of corruption; graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them. If you really understand the truth and importance of this distinction, then you will thank God for every opportunity and every help in examining your own hearts.

Brethren, it is with much consideration and deep anxiety for your souls, that I have adopted a plan which, by God's grace, may bring the people of this parish to a habit of self-examination. The object I have in view in the monthly Account to which I have already referred, and which it is my intention, God being my helper, to continue to send to you, is to endeavour to make you enquire where you stand in it, each one for himself, not searching for the place where his neighbour stands. It will be a help to you in seeking to judge yourselves; and I earnestly pray God to bless it. I expect it will be received in various ways. The little flock will take it, and look at it, and make use of it. They will not think about others, but each will be earnest in discovering where he himself is to be found. When they look at the attendance of the congregations, they will grieve over the number of those who neglect the services, and they will pray for them: therefore it will work well for them. Some of the second class that I have

before named, will not care much about the Account; some perhaps will look at it; but generally they will feel little interest in it. And as to the third and fourth class, what will they think about it? Some of them will probably throw it away, and treat it altogether with lightness; and some will scarcely ever know any thing at all about it. But all this will be nothing to me. Nothing to me! did I say? It will indeed be much, very much to me; for have I not that interest in it which I have already explained to you? If one soul only from amongst them be convinced of sin through that means; or one soul deepened in humility; it will be well worth all the labour and all the time that it will cost; aye! and it will be worth bearing all the disapprobation which some may bestow upon it.

Having, then, opened this matter to you, my beloved brethren, and explained my motives for so doing, I will proceed to shew you the object I had in view in connecting the subject with the text. It is upon this scripture that I ground the duty which I have been explaining to you. In it the principle of that duty is laid down and brought out by the Apostle.

The Apostle begins this Epistle by reproving the professing members of the Church at Corinth, for some evils and irregularities which had found their way amongst them. You will remember that he wrote to the Church (the communicants only), as you find in chapter i. verse 2. In the third chapter he tells them, that he is grieved because he had heard that they were disputing as to the minister whom they should follow. This occupies to the fourth verse of the chapter, and then he shews them the error of dividing according to their ministers. He says, "Who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man." v. 5. God appoints his ministers, one to do one thing in his church

and one another, but all the power comes from Himself alone. He shews the nothingness of any minister, and then brings forward a statement of the relative position of minister and people. He takes up a metaphor very common in the Scriptures, he compares the ministers to the labourers, and the people he calls the husbandry of God: he goes on with the comparison till he finds it will not carry him far enough; and then he lays aside the husbandry, and takes up another metaphor, that of the building of God. He leaves the language suitable to the field work, and adopts that which is suitable to building. The ministers he compares to the builders, and the people to the building itself; thus more fully illustrating the subject of the relative position of minister and people.

This portion of Scripture, then, it is my intention to bring before you in several different points; which I will now state in their order.

The first part of the subject will be God's HUSBANDRY; which shall be divided thus—

- I.—THE MINISTER'S NOTHINGNESS. "So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." v. 7.
- II.—THE ONENESS OF ALL CHRIST'S MINISTERS. "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one." v. 8.
- III.—THE MINISTER'S REWARD. "And every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour." v. 8.

Then the Apostle changes his comparison, which will bring us to consider the second part of the subject,

God's BUILDING; which will be divided into

- IV.—THE FOUNDATION. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." v. 11.
- V.—THE WORKMEN BY WHOM IT WAS LAID. "As a

wise master-builder I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon." But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. v. 10.

VI.—THE MATERIALS OF THE BUILDING. "Gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble." v. 12.

VII.—THE PROVING OF THE BUILDING. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." v. 13.

VIII.—THE WORKMAN'S GAIN. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." v. 14.

IX.—THE WORKMAN'S LOSS. "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss." v. 15.

And now, my beloved brethren, I do not know with what tone of feeling you may consider this subject, or how this arrangement may strike upon your minds. But I do most affectionately and solemnly warn you, that this is not an unimportant subject, nor one that is lightly brought before you. It is the result of much prayer; of much thought; and of much anxiety for your souls. Need I say, with Samuel of old, "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you?" Be assured, my brethren, it shall be my earnest prayer that God may mercifully be pleased to bless this course of instruction by His Holy Spirit to every one of you. As it is my conviction, on the one hand, that if it does not profit you, or if you neglect it, it will rise up in the judgment to condemn you; so also it is my hope, yea, my assured hope, that however some may treat it lightly, and only find out its importance when it rises up in that judgment; yet it will be blessed, and will be profitable to the souls of some—to the little flock which the Lord has amongst us.

LECTURE II.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 7—9.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry.

UPON the last Lord's day I explained to you fully my object in undertaking to deliver to you a certain course of instruction, founded upon a portion of the third chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. This passage will bring before us the relative position of the minister with the people; the position in which they stand as regards each other; and the position in which they both stand as regards God.

I. We will now proceed to consider the first point, THE NOTHINGNESS OF THE MINISTER, as an instrument employed in God's husbandry. In doing this, I earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit of God, without whom truly the minister is nothing, may be powerfully present with us. May He take of the things of Christ and shew them to us, giving grace to his instrument to speak, and to the people to hear and to attend to the word which is able to save their souls. May God, for Christ's sake, give us the Holy Spirit.

You are to keep in mind that the comparison of the husbandry is not mine, but that it is the Spirit of God who has employed it; it is He who says, "Ye are God's husbandry;" or as it is in the margin of the Bible, "Ye are God's tillage;" that is, the whole scheme or arrangement of carrying on the concerns of a farm.

In opening out this comparison he tells us in the first place, that the minister is nothing—"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." v. 5-7.

This brings before us a very strong statement, that in this work, this husbandry, the minister is to be considered meritoriously or essentially as nothing. In the relative position of the minister with the people, the point of view in which the minister may be as something will come hereafter, when we have to consider the third point, the minister's reward, or the sixth point, the materials of God's building. At present, what we have to do is to consider that the Spirit of God places before us, in the strongest way, that the person, the instrument, who is engaged by God for the purpose of collecting his people out of the world, and bringing them to Christ, is in himself nothing.

In examining this subject closely, we shall be led to many thoughts of the deepest importance; it opens a rich mine; it points to the very root of the matter; and we must endeavour to lay bare what is thus brought before us. In doing this, we shall discover that humiliating truth, to which every one who knows any thing of the work of the Spirit of God will bear testimony, that there is in man—in every man without a single exception—a natural unwillingness, a timidity, a repugnance to come into the presence of God; a feeling

of disinclination, a sort of shrinking at coming into close contact with God; a desire rather to keep God at a distance from us. This, I say, is in every man naturally. We find this to be the case with our unhappy first father and mother, Adam and Eve, immediately after they had disobeyed God. Walking in the garden in the cool of the day, "they heard the voice of the Lord God, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden." Thus did they vainly try to avoid coming into communication with God. We find the same state of feeling in the Jews, when God manifested his power at the giving of the commandments at Mount Sinai. They cried out in terror, "Let not God speak with us, lest we die." *Exod. xx. 19.* And so again, when Isaiah saw His glory in the temple, he exclaimed, "Woe is me! for I am undone," &c. *Is. vi. 5.* And whenever we find in the Scriptures an account of God's manifesting himself to man, we find at the same time a repugnance, a resistance, a terror in man at that discovery. This would seem strange, very strange indeed, if we examine what God is in himself, and what He is in relation to man. When we reflect upon His glorious attributes, His love, and His power, and His unbounded goodness; how He made the world, and clothed it in all its beauty, and filled it with that which is for our comfort; and how He has ordered the affections of our hearts, and the multiplied sources of enjoyment which they are calculated to produce. When we think of His preserving, fatherly, watchful care over us; and when we, who live in the dispensation of the Gospel, go one step further, and see how He has given His own Son to die for us, to redeem us from the curse; and how that Son of God "was rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" how he suffered the buffeting, and the shame, and the spitting; and how He rose from the grave and ascended into heaven;

and, to complete the great work, sent down the Holy Spirit; yea, is completing it now in heaven by the same means, and will not leave this work until He shall return again in glory: when, I say, we examine into all this, and discover what God is in relation to us, it is indeed strange that there should be a repugnance, a disinclination to come into contact with Him, and to stand before Him.

But perhaps it may appear to your minds, that those Scriptural instances which I have mentioned were extraordinary cases, and such as never happen now; as these are not days in which men have such plain revelations of God. Alas! my brethren, the same principle is ever at work. Whenever Christians attempt to have real communion or intercourse with God by prayer, this natural repugnance appears most plainly. Do you find it easy to come to the throne of God and have intercourse with Him in spirit? Can you readily lay aside your worldly concerns to enter into the presence of God, and find it all agreeable and pleasant? or does it cost you a struggle? Is it an effort to you? Alas! my beloved brethren, it is the experience of every one who by grace has been taught what prayer is, and who has ever endeavoured to hold real intercourse with God, even of those who have arrived at the highest advance of spiritual communion; it is, I say, the experience of all such, that they find within them, after all, still there is a natural disinclination, a repugnance, a feeling which makes them ashamed, and a wonder to themselves that they do not delight to stand in the presence of God, and find in it all their enjoyment, and all their happiness. If you wish for evidence that would establish this clearly, just look back for the last hour, and reflect what has passed in your own minds while you have been here for the purpose of worshipping God. What have you been doing all that time? Where has your mind been? I know what you have said with

intercourse with God, this unwillingness to come into contact with Him, which is not the case with others. I ask every prayerful member of the Church, whether it is not a cause of grief and shame and mourning to him, that he continually finds in himself a tendency to that repugnance, that unwillingness, which makes him ready to allow all the little hindrances and difficulties which come before him and too easily turn him aside, and are then framed into excuses: those hindrances, which, oftentimes helped on by the infirmity of our bodies, our minds readily catch at and yield to? Brethren, is this the case, or is it not? I ask those members of Christ who know something of what prayer is. Now this is one of the first principles of which I desire to remind you in this course of instruction, that there is a natural repugnance in man's heart to hold spiritual intercourse with God.

Without dwelling longer on this point, there is a second principle to be considered. There is in man a natural tendency to be slothful in all spiritual matters.

God has given to man very great capacities and powers for action. Man was not made to be an idle, slothful creature; but to be actively engaged in things for the glory of God, and the benefit of his own soul. As man came from God he was blessed with wonderful powers or talents, and with a pure and holy mind; with a mind that could find its happiness in God, and employ its working powers for His glory, and in the eternal interests of the soul. It was thus that man came from his Maker. But man did not long continue in this state. Sin entered into his soul, and reversed the whole current of his thoughts and affections; and though man has now the same wonderful active powers of mind and body, they are employed altogether in another direction; they are used to gratify the flesh, by indulging sin, and exalting self above God. We find still that the powers of man, which are given by God, are employed very actively and

diligently ; men are rising early, and late taking rest, and sparing no trouble or labour to prosper in their worldly concerns. What is it that men will not do to promote their health ; to gain a good character ; to increase their property, and to enjoy their pleasure ; for who is there that labours so hard to gain his object as the pleasure-seeker ? But how slothful are all men about spiritual matters. Let them be hindered in their worldly diligence for a time by the Providence of God ; let a fit of sickness seize them—a fever lay them low—or some family affliction befall them ; let some dear friend be taken from them by death ; or let any thing happen by which their attention is called to God ; then comes eternity and stares them in the face—an eternity which they are told is never to alter. They are solemnly warned that as it finds them, so they must remain for ever ; if living in sin, they will have the wages of sin *for ever* ; if living in pleasures they will be cut off from them *for ever*, and no better portion be given them ; if engrossed in worldly matters, they will be stripped of them *for ever* ; and if seeking Christ and loving Him, they will enjoy His presence in glory *for ever and ever*. Tell them this, I say, and there is a power in the intelligence which ought at once to change the whole current of their thoughts, and to stir up all their capacities in the service of God. But does it do this ? Experience gives us an answer. No, my brethren, it does not. Go and talk to the man who makes a profession that he believes this, and call him to something spiritual, something heavenly ; tell him to pour out his heart in prayer ; tell him to read his Bible, and to see the love of God as it shines there ; tell him to speak of Christ to those around him ; tell him these things, and then see the worldly—diligent man, how hard this seems to him ; how slothfully he sets about it. The Bible is brought, and he reads a chapter, or perhaps two, and thinks this is surely

enough; and to spend ten minutes in prayer seems abundance; more becomes irksome to him. Oh! the slothfulness of man as soon as his natural powers are addressed to spiritual things.

But there is one point more in the character of man which I must bring before you upon this occasion. Man is very proud. Naturally he thinks highly of self, and estimates things mainly with reference to himself. As made by God, he was made so that all his affections had reference to God as the grand centre, the one great object of his hopes and of his happiness. He was made that wonderful creature, finding his happiness in God, and delighting in His presence, with whom the Almighty held intercourse in Paradise. There he might have grown on, in holiness and happiness to eternity, in the glorious presence of his Maker. But he fell; the curse of sin came upon him; and now he is separated in heart and hope from God; now every man has a God of his own; his God is self; he considers himself before God; he follows his own desires and gratifications, and his own will rather than God's. This fills him with pride and rebellion against God. He is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

We do not like to know more of God, because it humbles us to do so. We do not like to look into God's word to be humbled. We find something there which condemns what we thought to be small offences; and makes us out to be very different creatures from what we thought and fancied ourselves. This does not suit our pride. We are very glad to take our friends' account of us rather than God's. But when God begins His work, and his word is set up as a light in the dark parts of our hearts, things begin to look very different. We begin to see that we are not quite so good as we thought we were; and this our hearts cannot bear: it is too humbling, and we rebel against it. When, however, the Spirit of God

comes, and sets up an influence against this proud rebellion of our hearts, He makes us agree to the humbling statements and warnings of God's word, to which otherwise we should not submit. In carrying on this work, the Spirit of God impresses us with a sense of the necessity of self-examination. This is what Satan also does not like : and he tries to turn us from it, lest our pride should be humbled, and we should be brought to the foot of the Cross.

I beseech you to keep in mind these three different points, in order that you may understand how I purpose to apply them. First, Man has a dislike, a repugnance to come into the presence of God ; Secondly, Man, with all his capacity and powers of action, is a slothful creature in spiritual things ; and Thirdly, Man is very proud. These three things are natural to man, and conspire to keep him from seeking communion with God.

It is the command of Christ himself, that the Gospel shall be every where preached. He said, " Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature"—" teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you ; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Mark xvi. 15, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. That Gospel is preached by His appointed servants. He sends them forth, and He is with them ; and the object of their preaching is to make men have direct communion with God ; to stir them up to holy diligence in His service ; and to humble them at the foot of the Cross, in order that they may enter into such intercourse with Him, as may fit them for the eternal state of glory which He has provided for His people. To do this, the Spirit of God works in the heart. Our own hearts struggle, the flesh against the Spirit ; but when the Spirit of God is mercifully making progress in us, He draws us more and more to the revealed will of God, making us more attentive to the Gospel as preached by His

servants. Thus the ministry of God's word becomes profitable to the soul. Satan sees this, and sees that men are being drawn to God by the preaching of His word; and then he comes and whispers to the soul, now you have enough; you need not be anxious; you cannot be under a better minister than you have; attend to him, and follow him, and you will be sure to be right. His object in doing this is to make the minister to be something in the mind, so that the heart is encouraged to rest in his ministrations; and presently he is made to stand up as a skreen between us and God. According to our natural disinclination, we are willing to hear any thing, or do any thing, to avoid coming into close contact with God. Then comes our natural slothfulness in aid of the other principle: and as long as something is kept between us and God, it is so easy and comfortable to rest upon another for settling our state in so difficult a matter, that by degrees Satan gets the soul to sit quietly down, and take whatever is taught as true, just because the minister says it—secretly making the minister the all-important something, instead of the instrumental nothing!

Do not, I entreat you, take any thing I say as being true on my word, but search the Bible for yourselves. For "who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed; even as the Lord gave to every man; for neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God who giveth the increase." Beware, I beseech you, of your tendency to keep away from personal contact with God; and beware of the slothfulness which would make me the intervening agent, as it were, in the matters of your soul. I am God's agent to you, and not yours to Him: your heart must settle your accounts with Christ yourself: I am absolutely nothing.

A Sermon is not done with when the preaching is over. The part of those who hear, is to take the words and bring

them before God in earnest prayer; to search in the Bible whether it be indeed the word of God; to sit apart as it were with God; and to ask Him to imprint upon your heart all that was true in it, and to make it profitable to your soul, to examine your own interest in its truth without reference to its delivery. A sermon thus received, and acted upon, brings us into close contact and direct intercourse with God.

Brethren, is this the way you act after hearing a sermon? does it bring you into close contact with God himself? If you do this, then indeed will you profit by the preaching that you hear, and fresh light will be poured upon your mind. It will bring you nearer to God, and make you more humble before him. You will see more clearly what you are in yourself; and that, but for the blood of Christ personally applied by faith, you would certainly perish; but that His blood and that alone saves you; and thus you will be brought to the Cross, and will cling to it as your only hope. This is the result of a right attention to the preaching of the Gospel, when received in an humble and faithful spirit; and in this the minister who preached to you is nothing.

We have seen how, on the one hand, Satan strives to hinder such an effect from being produced, by acting upon the natural repugnance of man to come into the presence of God, in combination with his *slothfulness*, which disposes him to take the minister's statement, and rest on the minister's opinion, in order to avoid the troublesome office of proving it by communion with God. On the other hand, the natural repugnance—that very same root of evil—operates in the heart of man, in combination with his *pride*; and many turn away from, and neglect the faithful preaching of the same Gospel, because they look upon it only as the word of a man, and are too proud to submit themselves to man's opinions. How often do men stifle the prickings of conscience, and neglect the most solemn warnings, because they think only of

the bold preacher who has dared to deliver them. How uncharitable, they say, for a man to say such things : how hard he is : who can bear it ? And so they become angry, and vent their displeasure upon *the man*, because their hearts secretly do not relish *the doctrine*. They would not dare to say that the Bible is false, nor to say any thing against God himself, however much they might wish His word were other than it is ; and, therefore, when the humbling truths of the Gospel are put before them in plain faithfulness, they place the minister between God and themselves, making him *something*, in order that he may be a convenient mark for that abuse which is the fruit of their disinclination from God, and their pride. They throw his words aside as being merely the statements of an individual, and so shut themselves out from communion with God in rebellion against him. Mark, I implore you, these varied devices of Satan : and if what your minister preaches is only that which is gathered from the word of God ; then the voice that brings it to your ear is *nothing* ; but it is at the peril of your souls if you reject the truth of God himself. Here the text may be applied with power, who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, servants sent and employed by the Lord Jesus Christ ; and beware of finding fault with *them*, and so covertly casting your darts of blasphemy against their Master. In the former case the minister is nothing that you should attend to his preaching, and receive it as true, because he says it ; and in the latter case the minister is nothing that you should think light of his message, and despise it as though it were his word : for in doing this you despise and neglect the Master who sends him. There is nothing in Paul, and nothing in Apollos, nothing in the preaching by any of Christ's ministers, that can reach the sinner's heart : it is God who calls attention to it ; it is He who opens the heart to receive the truth ; it is He who puts forth His power and breaks down the prejudices of the carnal

mind ; it is He who convinces of sin ; it is He who makes the love of Christ influential ; it is He who saves the soul ; it is God who does it all. " Neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth : but God that giveth the increase." Yes, it is God who does it all. But God condescends to do this by means, as is plainly and shortly, but powerfully stated in the text, " I have planted, Apollos watered ; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth ; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one : and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God : ye are God's husbandry." 1 Cor. iii. 6—9.

This comparison of husbandry is a very common one in the New Testament. It is found in the parable of the Wheat and the Tares ; in that of the Sower and the Seed ; in that of the Vineyard let out to Husbandmen ; and in many other passages. Let us take the comparison as it stands in our text. God is the great husbandman who owns the land ; he possesses all the materials for carrying on the tillage, and all the implements that are necessary, and the servants who are to work ; and he gives, from his store-houses, his magazines of plenty, the seed to be sown on the farm. He hires the labourers and pays them, and he appoints them their work in different parts of his great tillage, and He watches over them, and sees how each labourer does his allotted portion of the work. He directs the labour of the whole farm. Now beyond this no man, no earthly farmer can go ; beyond this the comparison will not extend. No man can call the rain down from heaven to moisten the earth, and to cause the seed sown to shoot forth and spring up : neither can man call the sun to shine to ripen the corn when it has sprung up. But God can do this besides all the rest. Just then consider what part the labourer has to do in the farm, under such a master :

he ploughs the ground, and he sows the seed as he is directed, but he has no power to make it grow. Who would say that a labourer should have the merit, or the praise of a good crop, just because for a short season he worked upon that land? On the other hand, if the crop failed, and no corn ripened, or came to perfection, who would blame the labourer for it, and say, "here is no crop, because such a one worked on the farm?"

The text tells us, my brethren, that we ministers of Christ are "labourers together with God;" and God alone can give the seed, or give us power to sow it, or send the sun and the rain to cause that which we sow at His command to spring up and to grow. We have no power at all. We are His labourers, and nothing more. This thought should excite you to a diligent spirit of self-examination, to see in what way you receive the preaching of the Gospel. Through what channel are you looking for the blessing? Whence do you expect the increase? Are you brought constantly into communion with God, lest you should trust to the intervention, or to the words of the minister. Commune with God yourselves; this is the great remedy for the evil of your hearts; this is the remedy for all mistakes concerning the ministry of His word.

A habit of bringing before God in prayer, every thing that is taught, and of watchful self-application, as in the presence of God, cuts at the very root of the evils I have brought before you as natural to man. It is a means of overcoming our repugnance to come into the presence of God, and it brings us into communion with him. It overcomes the second evil, the slothfulness of man as regards spiritual matters; it excites us to diligence in self-examination, and searching of the Scriptures, as in the presence of God. And it corrects also the third evil, our pride; for as soon as we begin really to look into our own hearts, and bring them to the test of God's word, we find out

that, after all, we are but poor unprofitable servants, and without the possibility of other hope than that afforded by the free mercy of God. These results will soon enable us to partake of the blessings the minister is the appointed means of imparting; thankfully and humbly to receive his instructions, while we acknowledge that all the blessing comes from God: "it is God that giveth the increase."

We will proceed to take up the second and third points, which will close the first division of the subject upon which we are engaged—the comparison of God's husbandry.

II. The second point to be observed from this passage of Scripture is, the Oneness of all Christ's Ministers: that though they are many persons, they are to be considered in fact but as *one*. "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one;" and this is a matter of more importance than many persons are aware of, or than appears to be the case at first sight. I dwelt at greater length upon the first point, the Nothingness of the Minister, than perhaps seemed necessary to some of you; because the principles there brought forward, the repugnance of man to come before God, his slothfulness, and the pride of his heart acting with it, run through every part of the opposition of the heart to the truth as it is in Jesus, in a very powerful degree. The slothful heart will not take the trouble to search the word of God for itself; it is bound hand and foot to the teaching of a *man*, and so makes the Paul, or the Apollos, or the Cephas, to be every thing: while, on the other hand, the proud will not submit to have the true nature of sin, and the evils of their own sins, plainly laid bare; and the consequence is, they reject such preaching, and rebel against it, under cover of its being the mere opinion of a man. But there is another way in which this evil principle works. Satan varies his snares with another device; not indeed so low, or so plainly wrong, as the open rebellion produced by pride; but which is not less dangerous to the soul in its

results ; I mean that by which he leads people into the snare of looking to the preacher, rather than to his doctrine, as *characterising the Gospel*. Not that he leads them to attach too much importance to the ministry generally ; but rather to select one minister out of many, as their favourite preacher, receiving the Gospel as he preaches it, and so deceiving themselves with the notion that they are religious, because they are followers of that particular man, forgetting that he is but one out of many of the ministers of Christ, who are all servants, labouring in the one Gospel.

I speak it advisedly, my brethren, when I say, that there is no tie on earth so strong, so affectionate, so durable, and so full of the deepest interest, as that which unites a person who has been brought out of darkness into light, and from Satan to God by the preaching of the Gospel, with the instrument by whom that Gospel was effectually preached. The Scripture authorizes the new convert to call that minister a father in Christ. Powerful and interesting as is the feeling of a child towards his father, it is not so powerful as that of the converted heart towards the minister who was honoured to be the instrument of preaching the word which produced the change of heart ; for this is a tie that will endure when all other ties are dissolved. Such has been the experience of thousands and tens of thousands of God's people all over the world. May the Holy Spirit dwell in every one of your hearts, that it may become your experience also. But it is a very common device of Satan to try to lower the power of God's word amongst a people, by making them distinguish some particular father in Christ, a Paul, or an Apollos, or a Cephas, as the one by whose standard they measure the preaching of God's word. This is an error which grieves the Spirit of God, and provokes severe chastisement : it tends to deaden the affections, and to draw the heart away from God, by limiting Him to His instrument. •

There are many persons who think they receive the Gospel in all sincerity, because they are glad when particular parts are brought before them ; and they consider themselves religious. They find some ministers who mainly dwell upon certain points only, and who seem to them to leave out certain parts which do not suit with their notions. On the other hand, they find a minister who brings forward doctrine which they consider as going too far ; and which condemns certain practices in which they see no harm. They make a choice between a Paul, a Cephas, and an Apollos ; and reject the word of God, when it comes home too closely to their hearts. The Apostle says, in the beginning of the chapter, that he could not speak unto the Corinthians " as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal. For while one saith, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not carnal, and walk as men." v. 1, 4. Then, having shewn that the minister, whether Paul or Apollos, is nothing, he goes on to manifest the error of placing one minister in opposition to another ; and says in the text, " He that planteth and he that watereth are one ;" all are alike labourers in Christ's Gospel, which is one and the same.

Now, my brethren, what do you receive ? What do you most appreciate ? Do you receive the Gospel for the Gospel's sake ? or do you receive the Gospel *according to* a particular minister ? If the latter be the case, you are in a sad mistake. You are indeed baptized professors, but that will only make your offence the greater. You are bearing the stamp of the church in your forehead, while you are going the way of the world ; and that too under the mistaken imagination that you are Christ's people, and loving the preaching of the Gospel, when you do but receive that portion of it which suits with your own opinions. May a spirit of wisdom be given to you in this matter, that you may know how to receive the whole truth of God, to the saving of your souls.

The whole of the grand scheme of the Gospel salvation—

that wonderful machinery appointed by God himself, as the means of collecting his people out of the darkness of this world, and of bringing them to himself—is contained in that little seed, that germ which is found in Mark xvi. 15, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature,” &c.; together with John iii. 16, “God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This is one complete work. In the fulfilment of this great work, various instruments are employed; and in the order of the machinery, there are various parts in which these instruments are arranged. These are the men whom Christ has been pleased to select out of the rest of their brethren to serve Him in the sacred ministry of His church, to preach His Gospel, and to collect His people out of the world.

As all Christ’s ministers are but His instruments, and as the work is entirely of God, who alone can give the increase, the only safe way in which you can at any time make use of the ministry, is by laying aside altogether any comparison as to difference between one instrument and another; and to receive the truth simply because Jesus sends it to you, and as he sends it. God has put into your hands abundantly the means of searching in His holy word; and if, when you hear any minister preach, you would try the doctrine diligently by the Scriptures, you would thereby be brought into close contact with God, and your souls would prosper under the ministry. The instrument would then stand to you in his proper position, and you would look for the blessing from the right source. Has any minister particular gifts which place him in your estimation before another, and which enable him, with more than common talent or earnestness, to set the truth before you? Then make use of the instrument as a means of glorifying God, who alone can give any good gift or talent to his servant; and pray for him. Has any minister a deficiency of

gifts, as you think? are there external hindrances in his preaching? and does he not suit your tone of feeling? Give glory to God, who can, even by means of broken instruments, make His word powerful to the saving of your soul; and pray for him. If this advice were acted upon, there would be no disproportioned valuing of a Paul or an Apollos, but a feeling of readiness to hear the preaching of the Gospel, and to receive the truth through this channel or that, by any minister whom Christ may be pleased to send to you. There would be a feeling of thankfulness, that, though preached with many hindrances, the Gospel is what it is,—able to save and comfort your soul, even when put before you by a minister whose manner does not altogether please you. Those who love the Gospel must, on the one hand, thankfully and humbly receive it with earnest prayer to be kept safe from the snare of limiting their Gospel to that delivered by their minister; and, on the other hand, those who have a disinclination to it must beware how they allow themselves to be deceived under the notion that it is only a particular minister of whom they disapprove. All must hear the truth, and seek the whole truth, because it is the truth of Jesus Christ, irrespective altogether of the instrument He employs; remembering that all his faithful ministers are *one*, inasmuch as they come from one Master, with but one Gospel.

III. We will proceed to inquire, how it is that God has been pleased to promise a special reward to His ministers, as we find in the text he has. “Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour.” We shall not however examine now into the nature of that reward: this will come more suitably into the second division of the subject. The word reward is often very much misunderstood. Reward is not the same as *wages*; it is not that which can be claimed as just payment, due when work is done. To illustrate this we may take a very common case. When children at a school

have conducted themselves satisfactorily, the master gives to any amongst them whom he may select a present; but to this they could have no sort of claim whatever; it is a free reward; it is all of favour; they can make no demand for it. Now the text contains a promise of just such a free and gracious reward. What that gracious reward is,—how it affects the minister,—and how it affects the people,—will come before us as soon as we come to the consideration of the 8th and 9th points of this instruction,—the **WORKMAN'S GAIN**, and the **WORKMAN'S LOSS**. It would be out of its place now; and I have merely called your attention thus shortly to the subject, in connection with its apportionment as regards the different ministers, “the labourers.” Thanks be to God that this free reward is held out—a reward not of merit, but of encouragement; to cheer the minister, and to urge him on in his work: A reward which the faithful minister estimates so much beyond any thing that this world can produce, that it encourages him to look altogether above the world. If he look forward to the jewelled crown, which is promised to those who turn many to righteousness, when they shall shine as the stars for ever and ever, it is enough to eclipse altogether in his view, all the earthly glories by which Satan so often strives to enslave and fetter him to the world. This, my brethren, is a great encouragement; and its connection in the Text is in order to shew that every minister shall receive this reward according to his labour. One minister plants, and another waters. I am brought here by the providence of God, after others who have gone before me, one after the other, for the last three hundred years, since the reformation. Here, then, I am brought by the providence of God, for the purpose of watering that which has been sown by others; and to put forth the great machinery adapted to gather in other souls. Each of us may share a proportion of the reward. How is it then possible, for a minister to go on preaching to a flock without

much earnestness of anxiety concerning the effectual result to their souls, if only for the sake of his own reward? Is it possible, I say, for me to look around upon you, while I preach to you, and then think of the anticipated reward, and not yearn over you, and tremble for you? Would to God that you would each apply this matter so personally, that it might make each cleave with greater earnestness to the Cross of Christ.

In closing this first division of the subject, I will suggest to you some important questions for self-examination, in order that you may profit by it. The argument of the Apostle is summed up in the 9th verse, where he closes his first comparison of the farm, or husbandry, and applies it; he says, "Ye are God's husbandry." The ministers are the labourers, working together with God. Paul, who planted, and Apollos, who watered, are labourers, labourers only, and God's people are the husbandry. If this be the case, I cannot employ too much earnestness in pressing upon you the question, Are you, my brethren, God's husbandry? Many of you are habitually engaged in agricultural labour, and are well acquainted with the comparison which is thus brought before you; I beseech you to put the question each to his own heart, "Am I a part of God's husbandry?" The husbandry, the tillage, you well know produces the harvest. You can go forth to the fields, and see them ripening for the harvest. You have an interest in the fruits, which either belong to you, or you are one of those who will be engaged in reaping the corn, or in gathering it in, or it may be in gleaning after the reaper; but in some way or other you are expecting to receive the benefit of the fruits of the earth, the husbandry you are engaged in.

The word of God says, "Ye are God's husbandry;" I ask you, what are your fruits? Are they such as justify you in hoping that you are indeed ripening for God's harvest? Are they such as the Spirit of God works in the hearts of his people? I stand here as the labourer, looking forward to the

time when the Lord's harvest will be gathered in. While you are preparing for the harvest of the earth, and occupying your minds about it, I am looking upon you as the standing corn, hastening fast on to the time when you will be gathered. Remember that parable, that terrible parable—I call it terrible because it so clearly distinguishes, and draws the contrast between those who are the Lord's husbandry, and those who are not—the parable of the Wheat and the Tares. The zizan, or false wheat, grows up like the true, and is not known to be false till the fruit comes; and then, you will remember, the one is to be gathered into the garner, and the other is to be bound for the burning. Are you wheat, or are you tares? Are you, my brethren, thus God's husbandry? What does the parable say also of the tares? "He that soweth them is the Devil." Though God sends forth the wheat, and sows it—though God sends me as his labourer to do the appointed work of his tillage—though God's Holy Spirit takes His word and applies it, and some are converted by it, turned in the whole current of their affections, thoughts, and desires, so that old things pass away, and they are children of God, and fitted for eternal glory:—while, I say, God does all this—yet we know also, from the parable, that the Devil goes after the labourer—and while I am here preaching to you the Gospel of Christ, and watching how you apply it, the Devil goes after me, to try and confuse your minds, and bewilder you, that you should not understand it. While I am telling you the minister is nothing, the Devil goes after me, to make you think the minister is something, either in one way, or the other. While I am calling upon you to search well into your own hearts, and not to deceive yourselves, Satan follows me, to choke up your minds with the cares and pleasures of the world; or to make the exhortation fall upon the stony heart of unbelief—any thing to rob you of your souls, and the minister of his crown; that crown in which he longs

to have you placed as so many jewels. Oh, my beloved brethren, how can I too earnestly ask you, "Are you God's wheat, or are you the devil's tares?" I know not how to distinguish them; I cannot know, till the day come, that proves which is which: till then I cannot, I dare not attempt to separate them. "Let both grow together till the harvest." Then I shall know indeed, and then you will know; and oh, how terrible will be the discovery to those who have never thought of it before, to find out that they are only tares fit for the burning. In that day I shall perceive who God has been pleased to plant in His husbandry, and to draw, by the preaching of that very same word, which perhaps some of you have neglected, and others have derided. When the few years of time shall have passed away—these short years which so rapidly escape—and eternity, a never-ending state, shall open; what millions of ages of sorrow, remorse, and bitter regret, will follow to those who will not be of God's tillage now. Are you, once more I ask, a portion of "God's husbandry?" In answering this question, I do implore you be honest with yourselves; your salvation depends upon it.

LECTURE III.

I CORINTHIANS iii. 9—11.

Ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

IN following the course of instruction marked out for our consideration, we have already examined, in three different points of view, the former of the two comparisons found in this chapter; the comparison of God's husbandry, or tillage; in which the church is compared to a farm, and the ministers to the labourers employed in its cultivation. In pursuing this comparison we have seen, 1st. The minister's nothingness; 2ndly. The oneness of Christ's ministers; and 3rdly. we have, in some respects, entered upon the minister's reward. But the Apostle seems to have found that the comparison did not go far enough for the purpose he had in view; that it did not enable him to carry out into detail all the results connected with the subject; therefore, in the 9th verse, he puts aside altogether the metaphor of the husbandry, and takes up a new comparison; He says, "Ye are God's building; according to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." Then he brings

before us the different parts of a building ; the foundation, and the materials employed in building upon it ; and closes the comparison, by shewing the connexion that exists between the building itself and the builders employed in erecting it.

It will be enough for us to-day to consider the general building itself ; then something of the foundation, and then the builders by whom it is laid, and those by whom the erection of the building is carried on. And in doing this, I pray God that, of His great mercy, we may be enabled to perceive His object in bringing this comparison before us in His holy word ; that we may have grace and wisdom, and humility, and faith. May He direct and assist His minister, and give power to the word preached that it may be written upon the hearts of the people, and used to the glory of His own name. May God, for Christ's sake, give us the Holy Spirit.

And first, then, as to the general comparison we are about to consider, "Ye are God's building." In order to make this clear, we must enquire who are meant by "ye ;" because the letter which contains this comparison is addressed to particular persons, and the "ye" must refer to the persons named in the address. We find in the first chapter the apostle begins thus—"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother ; unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." (v. 1, 2.) This explains to us the proper application of the word "ye." It refers to the church of God, not only at Corinth, but, as we find in the 2nd verse, "all that in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ;" all that are "sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints ; all that in every place call upon

the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; which includes us here in this place; we, who call upon the name of the Lord, are a part of those whom the apostle calls "God's building." The idea is simply this; that in the same way as a house is built by the putting together of a number of stones and other materials collected from various places, all raised one upon another; and as the building of it is conducted by a head, or master-builder, who has various labourers working with him, all according to the direction of the person who has ordered and planned it, and who is to dwell in the house and make it his habitation; just so it is with the church, which is the prepared habitation or dwelling place of God. From this it appears that the various individuals who form the church of Christ upon earth, are collected from various parts, and placed together and united, as the various stones and other materials are in the building of a house. Each saint—each person who calls upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—each member of the church is one of the number who are joined together to form that which is called the Church, or a building or habitation for God. We know and understand the various matters connected with the building of a house; therefore, by the comparison, as employed by the Spirit of God, we may also understand what is the nature of the "building of God," or His house, as it is called in Hebrews iii. 6, "Whose house are we." Ye, then, my brethren, are God's building; that is, all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and make their profession of faith in Him—his Church. This is a usual comparison in the Scriptures. In Ephesians (ii. 20—22), the apostle, speaking of the Church, says, ye "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God

through the Spirit." And here we have a larger statement of that little word in our text, "ye,"—"ye are God's building." Ye are built, framed together, bound and united by Jesus Christ, who is the chief corner stone, in whom all the building groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord—builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. If an architect or master-builder were to receive an order to build the fabric of a church, he would bring the stones, and have them placed one upon another, and all the proper materials to enable him to raise a noble edifice, suitable for the object for which it was to be built—a house for the worship and service of God. This passage shows how the comparison applies to the Church of Christ—the holy people—the saints, all in every place, who call upon the name of Jesus Christ: they are united or joined together in Christ Jesus, as the various stones are in the building, and form together that body in the midst of whom, as in a house, God dwells by His Spirit.

IV. Having thus, in a general manner, stated the Scripture comparison of God's building, we will at once proceed to consider how the Apostle, by the Spirit of God, brings before us the different parts and materials. He begins, as he ought to begin, by speaking first of all of the foundation. The folly of raising a building without taking heed to the foundation, is very plain. Therefore, he says "according to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon;" and then he explains, in the 11th verse, that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." And this places in its fitting position, that which is the beginning of the gathering together of God's people, so as to form a home or habitation for God. No house can stand without a foundation. Christ is the foundation. He is that which the first and master-stone is in a building; that

on which all the other stones rest; that which is stronger than all the others, and bears them all up; that which is most solid in itself, and lies closest to the rock upon which it is necessarily laid, having to bear the weight of the whole building; that which, in short, is the chief stone, the master support of the whole; this, he says, is JESUS CHRIST.

And here let me draw your attention to another Scripture, which will further explain this. You will find it in the 28th chapter of Isaiah, and the 16th verse. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." And in the 9th chapter of Romans, 33rd verse, this is applied to Jesus Christ, by St. Paul, who says, "whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed." St. Peter also quotes the same Scripture, and applies it to Jesus Christ. "Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (1 Pet. ii. 6.) In both these epistles this Scripture is applied to Jesus Christ himself; so that here we have a clearer, a larger, and a more distinct explanation of the Foundation of God's building, that is, His church, which we are considering. Let us examine a little how this comparison of the foundation, being applied to Jesus Christ, holds good. You must remember that, being called a stone, He is to be considered as one just like the other stones of which the building is composed; that is, He is a man—a brother in the flesh—a partaker of the human nature—one in all things like unto us, sin only excepted. A mistake commonly made in considering this portion of Scripture, is to suppose that the foundation means merely the doctrine of Jesus Christ. But in this sense the comparison would not be complete. The picture would not be a perfect one, if the stone chosen for the foundation were not one of the same kind as those of which the building

is afterwards to be raised. Therefore we look to Jesus Christ—the foundation stone in God's building, as a man—as our brother, now at the right hand of God. God himself chose Christ Jesus to be the foundation; He chose Him, a man born of a woman, and placed Him in the position of other men, under the law for man, that He, being like them, might be placed as the foundation of all their hopes. There is at this moment a man in heaven; a man who, being without spot or stain of sin, can, on his own account, stand before God. And this, I say, is the foundation of all our hope, and of all our peace. This is the only hope we can have of the dwelling of God with us. This is the only foundation of hope for sinful man, for any one who pretends to be a Christian, and who looks upon things in their true light, in that light in which they will be seen when they are opened to our view, in all their reality, in eternity. He is in heaven a man, chosen by God and placed as a sure Foundation for his church. He is a crucified man; a man brought under the heavy curse and punishment of sin for us; despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. (Isa. liii. 3.) He is the man who loved us even to the death, and bore the wrath of God for our sins—He bore it all, though He deserved none—He is the man who was brought as a condemned criminal—offered up a sacrifice for sin—suffered His precious blood to be shed—and gave Himself up to the power and malice of Satan, just for this one purpose, that He might purge away our sin, and might sprinkle our conscience with His blood; that we might have peace here, and might stand in God's sight justified from every charge of sin; our sins having been charged and punished upon Him who stood as our substitute. He is the man, moreover, who, having received the Spirit in all fulness, sent that Holy Ghost to establish His church upon earth. He is that very man who sent His servants forth, and

commanded them to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." He is the man who has power with God and prevails, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us. He is the man who casts out none who come to Him. Therefore, He is the man preferred to all the rest of men—chosen out from all other men to be a fitting stone for the foundation of God's building. He is the only one fitted for a foundation stone, because of His preciousness—fitted, because given to us by the Father as the rock on which we may safely build all our hopes and all our expectations—fitted, because He is the one in whom we may trust for strength—able to bear the whole weight of the stones placed upon Him; and to whom we may look for comfort and support, till the very topstone is brought, and placed upon the building with "shoutings of grace, grace, unto it." (Zech. iv. 7.)

The foundation stone, in whom whosoever believeth shall never be ashamed. Oh! my brethren, rest upon Christ. He is a sure foundation—rest upon His love—His grace—His tenderness and sympathy—His mediation and His power. He is a precious stone to be built on—He is the Son of God made man—made like unto us, that we may have a sure ground of confidence to trust in Him. He is the only foundation, for other foundation can no man lay. Turn to the Prophet Isaiah, and read what Jehovah there declares concerning Christ as the foundation laid in Zion: if any one of us could read that rich display of grace, and trace the earnestness contained in that glorious statement and not be moved by it, and not have our affections raised to God, and our hearts warmed with love, what greater proof could there be of the perverseness and hardness of our hearts? And yet such is the miserable and self-satisfied state of heart of that wise being called man (wise in its own eyes,) that he would rather take his own reasoning—his own righteousness—his

own any thing, to build his hopes of peace and happiness upon, than this sure, tried, and precious foundation stone that is laid for him. Oh ! the multitude of ways that Satan has of deceiving fallen man, by laying false and failing foundations instead of the true one. Any thing rather than Jesus Christ.

And here I beseech you to remember, that when the Spirit of God says "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," He means not only that Christ is the foundation, but the *entire* foundation. And this, perhaps, is of more importance to observe than many of you are aware of ; because it is likely that none are here present but those who will acknowledge that Christ is the source of eternal life ; that *of course* Jesus Christ is their Saviour, and that *of course* they cannot be saved without Him ; and therefore they sum up all their prayers "through Jesus Christ our Lord." But the common device of man's heart is to suggest that besides this true foundation, which all are very willing to allege they believe in *as a part* of their dependence, there must be something else of their own laid as low as the foundation, and upon which they may rest a part of their hope of salvation. That is, they will acknowledge Christ *of course* ; but then they place their own good works,—that is *themselves*, by the side of Him. They believe in Christ ; but then they must *do* something to make their salvation sure. Here is the self-righteous corruption of man, helped on by the cunning device of the devil.

We must work because God requires it ; we must be fruitful in good works because Christ has ordained that His people should walk in them : but then all this must be because we are *upon* the foundation, and not *by the side* of it. But men make an excavation as near as possible to the true foundation, and fill it up with notions of their own good works, in order to rest a part of their hope of salvation upon themselves. Those persons who are building in this way will never expe-

rience solid peace of conscience here, nor will they ever enter into rest hereafter. Many persons will very readily take Christ as a Saviour to make up their own imperfections; and so deceive themselves, and say they hope to be saved, because they are building upon the sure foundation, when in fact they are only laying a foundation of their own in connexion with Him. I beseech you, brethren, to consider this. This part of the comparison is calculated to shew the folly of mixing faith and works together as a foundation of hope. You must work because God commands it. "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (2. Tim. ii. 19.) And if any one of you imagine for a moment that you have found the sure foundation, and are built upon it, while you are going on in a life of sin, I warn you that you only deceive yourselves; and that if you go on so, you will perish. I warn you that faith which does not bring forth the fruit of good works—which does not purify the heart from the love of the world and the love of sin, is a dead faith, and will never save the soul. But I warn you also, that to think of placing yourselves by the side of the foundation, Jesus Christ, in the building of His Church, is a device of Satan, and that he has safely in his power all those, however moral, or amiable, or well-disposed they may be, who do not rest solely, absolutely, and entirely upon Jesus Christ. If the thought of our own good works, and amiable lives, and kind-heartedness, or any thing else finds its way, in our secret hopes, in connexion with Christ, then we may be assured that though the foundation of the Temple has been laid, we have not yet been rightly built upon it, for Christ is an entire foundation, and will have nothing laid by the side of Him.

V. We must now consider the laying of this foundation. I refer you again to that same text in Isaiah, where it is said **JEHOVAH** laid it. "Behold I lay in Zion, for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure founda-

tion; he that believeth shall not make haste" (Isa. xxviii. 16). Here, then, we have the laying of it ascribed to Jehovah Himself. But turn to the passage we are considering and you will find the Apostle says, "I have laid the foundation." How is this? By Isaiah, God is not speaking of means, but rather of the great object he had in view. He is speaking of the great plan designed in His own mind and counsels, just as a proprietor about to build a house might say, "I will lay this or that foundation, "expressing his intention to have it so done. In Isaiah the means are not spoken of at all; it is the grand object itself that is brought to our view. But, in the Epistle to the Corinthians, the purpose of the Apostle is to make the Church understand the proper use of means, and the relative position of the different ministers who preach to them. The whole matter is just this—God having designed a building, which he intends for His habitation, appoints the foundation, and then entrusts it to the architect, or person employed to carry out the plan and complete the building. Here is no contradiction at all. If there were any doubt upon the subject, it must be removed when the Apostle says, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation." That is, he was employed in laying the foundation, according to the favour of God in choosing him to be an architect or master-builder instead of any other person. He simply declares what sort of workmen God chooses from amongst their fellow creatures, and employs them as instruments in collecting His people out of different parts of the world, and in building his Church.

In the first place we find, in this work of forming God's church, two kinds of persons are employed—the master-builders who laid the foundation, and others who built thereupon. There were twelve of these master-builders; indeed, there were thirteen when the Lord chose Paul to be

His apostle, giving him a commission to go and preach to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." (Acts xxvi. 18). These master-builders employed by Christ are the apostles, and the plan that was put into their hands by the Great One who employed them is this—"Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) Here is the plan of the building in this gospel; here are the credentials given to the master-builders; and here is the laying of the foundation—the laying of the only foundation by Jehovah himself; Christ, the true foundation, to whom both prophets and apostles bear witness. He is the only foundation; the only rock on which we may safely build; the only foundation for pardon and peace; the only Mediator—the only Saviour. Here is the lifting up of the cross of Christ—the chief corner stone—the sure foundation. The preaching of that gospel is the means, appointed by God himself, for taking one stone here, and another there, out of the quarry of the world, and placing them in the building. By this means, through the persuasive power of the Holy Spirit accompanying it, three thousand stones were upon one occasion collected and added to the building. As a wise master-builder, Paul and the other apostles went forth and laid the foundation of the christian church. I, says Paul, have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon; and, blessed be God, the foundation is now laid for the church which will endure through eternity. When, through the apostle's preaching, the laid foundation was proclaimed through various parts of the earth, and the light of the Gospel was set up, so that it shone with brightness on the dark world around

it, the master-builders were called away, and left the building unfinished in the hands of others, who were to carry it on.

But while it is distinctly said that Paul was one of the master-builders, it is also declared that every one of the builders afterwards, even to the present generation, are "labourers together with God." Labourers, not to lay the foundation, but to build thereupon—not to begin building the church, but to add to it daily such as shall be saved. Yes, brethren, after the master-builders were taken from their work, others went forth and followed them, and collected materials, and added them to the building; and so it is that now, in this present generation, I am the person chosen, as a builder, to collect materials for the building from amongst you. I am sent to preach the word of God unto you—that word which calls Christ's people out of the world, and invites the weary and heavy laden to come to Jesus Christ and be refreshed—that word which converts the heart, which comforts those who already know the Lord; and which brings others to join themselves to the people of God.

It is simply because this building is not completed that the wicked are allowed to go on in their wickedness, without the wrath of God falling upon them. It is just because there are yet more stones to be taken out of the quarry and added to the building, that the children of the world are allowed to go on in their awful forgetfulness, and rebellion, and blasphemy; madly provoking the long-suffering patience of God. When, however, the last stone shall have been added to the building, and the cornice shall be finished, then God will tolerate sin no longer; but He will take "vengeance on all them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ:" then will a fearful destruction take place, for it will be the day of righteous

vengeance. Then will the mere moral liver, and the formalist, as well as the more openly wicked, who have proudly thought that society would scarcely be carried on without them, find that they have been as nothing, and that there is nothing more for them to do; the building will be completed, and they will be left to perish.

But ye, brethren, are God's building. Remember, this is the comparison employed by the Holy Ghost. In erecting this building, He has chosen certain men, from amongst others, to be His instruments in collecting and placing the materials together; that is to say, He has sent forth His ministers, by whom He adds to the church daily such as shall be saved. You, brethren, profess to be members of that church, at least such of you as are communicants. Such of you as are not, do not acknowledge yourselves to be members of His church; but I would beseech you who make this profession, to ask yourselves with earnestness, Are you truly a part of God's building? Are you stones in it, built upon Christ the only sure foundation? Is the desire to be amongst the number of God's people the one great object with you? Is it that which makes your lives of importance to you?

Brethren, can you follow on with these thoughts? Do they suit your mind? Do you esteem it your greatest treasure—your highest honour—to be a part of God's building? Do you consider it as being a greater honour than any thing in all the earth beside? When you are asked what you are, is it a privilege to be enabled to say, I am one of the saints—one of those called into Christ's church, and am looking forward, as the highest point of my expectation, to the time when I shall be in the presence of the Lamb? Is this your prospect?

I would urge this upon you with all affection, because if any of you are going on, only amusing yourselves with

the trifles of time, finding your joy in the pleasures of the world, all of which will perish in their using; if this be the case, then, when the house or building of God is completed, and shines forth with the brightness of the light, and the glory of the Lamb for ever and ever, you will be swept away into outer darkness, where there will be weeping, and wailing; and gnashing of teeth. If, on the other hand, you have found out that Christ is the only foundation—that He is a whole and complete Saviour, and if you are resting only upon Him—if you are looking forward to the time when His building shall be completed, and when He shall return in His glory—if you are looking forward to this with joyful anticipations, then, when His building shall be manifested, your hope shall be realised, and it will be proved that Christ has indeed added you to His church.

If you are resting only on the blessed hope that Christ has died for you—that for you He lived—for you He shed His blood—for you He now intercedes in heaven;—if you are looking to Him for strength to enable you to overcome the world, and the flesh, and the devil—longing for His glorious appearing;—if this is, in any effectual degree, the true state of your hearts, then praised be God for His great mercy to you. “Ye are God’s building;” and praised be God also, who has graciously permitted me to be the builder, who has gathered some of you, and placed you as the materials upon the foundation of His building. May the Lord impress these thoughts on our minds, and so prepare us profitably to consider the nature of the materials used in this building; and may our hearts desire above all things to be found to be “gold, silver, and precious stones” added to God’s building, to His glory and our own eternal happiness.

LECTURE IV.

I CORINTHIANS, iii. 10-13.

But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

IN considering this important passage of Scripture we have proceeded some way in the steps marked out at the beginning. And after having examined the whole of the former part, that is, the comparison of "God's husbandry," we last Lord's Day entered upon the second comparison, "God's building." Having laid open the general features of that building, we further considered the "foundation," which was the fourth head; and fifthly, the workmen by whom that foundation was laid. In that last part the distinction was made between those persons, the master-builders who laid the foundation (who I shewed you were the Apostles, that were sent forth to begin the building, and thus establish the Church of Christ upon earth), and those persons that followed after, and built thereupon; that is, all the other ministers of Christ from that day to this. We will proceed to-day to consider the sixth point of the subject, the materials of the building. And I pray God that according to His promise He may be with us, and that we may know assuredly that He is in the midst of

us. May the Spirit of God guide and assist His minister to lay open the truth of His word, and may He open the hearts of the people, that they may attend to the things that are spoken. May God, for Christ's sake, give us the Holy Spirit.

VI. I confess, my brethren, that it is with more than ordinary feeling that I enter upon the consideration of this particular branch of the enquiry—the materials of the building: for now we are come to that part of the subject, which, if it had been possible to have preached the whole in one sermon, would have stood as the application of it; and which brings the matter home and close to every man's conscience; and calls upon each to examine himself before God, as to which of the different classes of materials used in this building he belongs.

This part of the subject is so deeply important, that I cannot approach it without a trembling; not however a trembling for fear, at bringing the application close home to your hearts, lest any of you should be offended by it. No, brethren, not that trembling; for the command of God to preach His word—to warn the unruly—to declare the whole counsel of God—and to tell you the truth as it is in Jesus—this, I say, sets aside the fear of man altogether. We do not fear to tell you the whole truth; but there is a fear, a trembling, which may arise in the heart of one who knows that he is placed in Christ's name to collect His people out of the world;—one who is sent forth by proper authority, and by the chief officers in the Church, “to go and seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ for ever,” as it is expressed in the Ordination Service. One, I say, placed in such a situation cannot but tremble when, in a regular course of instruction, he arrives at that precise point in which the people are necessarily brought in such a

position, that the word preached must be either usefully, humbly, and profitably received; or else refused or slighted, and the edge of it blunted, and the application of it cast off; so that the opportunity is thrown away by them, to be laid up in store by Christ, in order to call them to an account for it. May the Holy Spirit so bless the sifting power of His own word which we are now entering upon, that it may not be lost upon a single soul amongst us.

I would now only urge you to remember the explanation I gave of the general nature of God's building. You will recollect that the whole building is the Church of Christ,—the whole Church; and that the different individuals of the Church are the materials of which the building is formed. The foundation is not the doctrine of Jesus Christ, but the person of Jesus Christ Himself, laid down as the stone for a foundation—a stone like the other stones—a stone capable of bearing the others—the corner stone—the chief stone—to repeat the words of the Prophet, “A tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation.” (Isa. xxviii. 16.) He then, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, is that corner stone—that foundation; and all the different materials, as different portions of the building, collected from different places, are meant, in the comparison, to express the different individuals who profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—the members of the Church, for the completing of the number of whom we have so often prayed when any one whom we have reckoned to be amongst them has been laid aside in the grave, when we have called upon God to accomplish the number of His elect and to hasten his kingdom. Now when that number shall be finished—the last elect soul converted—the last stone added to the building—the last and topmost pinnacle completed;—then, the work being done, all the means will be for ever set aside—the end will be revealed; and then will every part shew with surpassing brightness and glory what is meant by “God's

building ;" for the house being finished, the habitation being prepared and ready, it shall be manifested, and the Lord Jehovah in the midst, in his exceeding glory, surrounded by all His people. This being the case, you are to remember that the comparison of different materials, which we are about to consider, does not mean different states of mind in the same or different persons, but different classes of people forming the outward and visible Church.

We will consider, first, the warning, "Let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." Paul, one of the master-builders—he who first laid the foundation in various parts of the world—he who established the Church—he, who in Thessalonica went among the Jews opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead ; and that Jesus, whom he thus preached to them, was the Christ (Acts xvii. 3.)—he who dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, speaking to all who came to him, and teaching them the things concerning the Lord Jesus (Acts xxvii. 30, 31.)—he who thus himself laid the one true foundation, knowing that in other generations other persons would be called to add to the Church, the building which he had begun ; he now in this epistle gives this solemn warning to every minister who should ever follow after him to the end of the world—"Let every man take heed *how*" (I call your attention to that word *how*, not *what*) "he buildeth thereupon." After this warning here follows a very striking classification of materials. 1st. A class of materials that would not be destroyed by the action of fire ; and, 2ndly. A class of materials that would be destroyed by the action of fire. Then he goes on and says, that "every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, for it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is ;" which application of his warning we must consider upon the next occasion.

The ministers are to take heed *how* they build upon the true foundation. And here, you observe, it is clearly understood that Christ is preached—the true foundation is laid—the building is begun, and the minister is engaged in adding stone upon stone to the building, so that this casts out of the question altogether every minister who does not preach Christ, or who preaches our own good works for justification instead; and thus lays another foundation. It does not at all apply, I say, to such; but this we will not enter into: it is a subject that would carry us too far from our present object. Suffice it to say, that such ministers are not builders at all, though they have been hired to be so employed. The builders are those who truly preach Christ, and who are striving by every means to add true members to the church—stones to the building of God. We preach Christ to you; we tell you of his readiness to save you; will you come and be saved? We shew you that it was necessary for that great atonement to be made for the sins of the world. We tell you that it was needful for a man to bleed and die. We tell you that such a man has come—the second Adam—the seed of Abraham—the Son of Mary—the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Thus has the sure foundation—the precious corner stone—been laid by God himself, and made known throughout the world, by the apostles at first; and His servants are employed in extending the building, by gathering stones to add to it. Then comes the warning to those very ministers—"I," says the apostle, "have laid the foundation, and let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereon."

To understand this matter rightly, we must look to the two classes of materials that are brought before us; and these, we find, are such as may be divided by that powerful test—fire. "Gold, silver, and precious stones," are things that cannot be destroyed by fire. Wood, hay, stubble, are things that cannot resist fire, but would be destroyed by it. If, therefore, a work

is to be done, and a house to be built that will stand the action of fire upon it, and not be destroyed, it must be built of those materials which themselves will bear the action of fire. If, on the other hand, a house is to be built that is not to be exposed to the danger of fire, then a wooden thatched house would do for the purpose.

The apostle does not place the first class of things—"gold, silver, and precious stones," before us by themselves, but he draws a contrast between those materials and others. In the description of the glory of the temple built by Solomon as above every other house, we find in the 1st Kings (vi. 21, 22) it is said that he overlaid the house with pure gold. And again, "the whole house he overlaid with gold;" or, as it is more particularly told in 2 Chron. (iii. 6, 7) "he overlaid the house, the beams, the posts and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold;" and, "he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty." If we look also to that brilliant description of the New Jerusalem (concerning which, whether we understand it figuratively or not, language to the same effect is made use of) we find in the Revelation (xxi. 10—27) where the description of it is given, that the houses and the streets are of pure gold, and the very gates of pearls and precious stones. All these, "gold, silver, and precious stones," are parts of the materials of a magnificent house therefore, and those parts, moreover, which will bear the action of fire: so the apostle chooses these, in the text we are considering, to express the true spiritual children of God; those who are born again of the Holy Spirit, and united by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ—those who by His grace are made fitting to stand as materials in His building—who in the whole management of their spiritual life are continually being led forward by Him; and, as you read in the Psalm cxliv. 12, "grow up before him as plants, as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." In using this building as the com-

parison to describe the church of Christ, the apostle further chooses those particular materials employed in it that are the most beautiful, valuable and substantial; and that will bear the trial of fire—"gold, silver, precious stones;" and by these he would represent to us those persons who, being the children of God, under all the circumstances of trial, and temptation, and persecution, are only manifested the more brightly and clearly to be His children. Shining as lights in a dark world, having their hope and their affections on high (that great characteristic of all God's people,) they, by their trials and distresses, are proved to be prepared for that better and glorious state of things hereafter which is infinitely beyond, and altogether above every thing they could enjoy in the present state. They are looking for the glory that is to be revealed at the coming of the Lord. They groan within themselves being burthened; and their earnest expectation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. They know that the glory then to be revealed will be surpassing, and will totally eclipse every thing the world can offer them. Thus they live with their mind, their affection fixed upon Christ and the glories of His kingdom; and when that glorious kingdom shall be fully established, they shall shine as precious stones in the house; the completion of the building being the gathering together, into one glorious company, the whole of God's people. These are spoken of in the comparison as the "gold, silver, and precious stones."

And these valuable and brilliant materials are used to express the true children of God, for another reason:—there is something solid and permanent in the construction of a house that is to be ornamented and beautified with gold, silver, and precious stones: it is not a mere temporary residence; it is not built for the present day only. The most durable materials are chosen, that it may be able to survive all the circumstances and accidents to which it may be exposed.

Therefore when gold, silver, and precious stones are employed in a building, we have at once the idea of a house in the construction of which there is solidity and permanency, as well as beauty and value. And such a building is the Church of God.

And now, my brethren, let us turn to the other classification of materials—the “wood and thatch.”

If a person had to build a royal palace, he would at once set to work to select the best and most durable materials; and gold, silver, and precious stones for the beautifying of it: but if he wanted merely a temporary building, just to cover him from the rain and to suit a temporary state of things, and no more; then it would be quite sufficient to put up a light wooden house, and thatch it with straw. When you see a house lightly built of wood, thatched with straw, and with but few, if any, durable and costly materials used in the building, you say at once that it is merely a poor cottage; and it gives you no expectation that the person who built it intended it to endure for any long time; neither does it attract your attention: you see nothing in its construction to admire—no value in the materials that are used in it; and you say at once, that house may serve just for the present season, but it will not stand long: it will not stand many stormy seasons, neither will it be safe from fire. If you go into a town, and pass through its streets, you at once observe the difference of the houses: some you perceive are well constructed, built with solid and durable materials, and others only like sheds. So in this building that we are considering, by another class of materials very different sort of persons are brought before us—“wood, hay, stubble”—persons built upon the foundation, Jesus Christ; not the heathen, but persons who make a profession of true religion;—persons who have been baptized into the visible Church—who come and join the congregation of God’s people, and who are numbered amongst them—who attend the communion of the Lord’s Supper:—persons who

stand up and say the creed, and declare their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—persons who acknowledge and consent to the great truths of religion that are brought before them, which they are told are gathered from the Scriptures, though without taking the trouble to examine for themselves, and to see whether they are according to them : — these think that being portions of a house on the true foundation, they have a something, a knowledge and a profession, which makes them claim to be a part of God's building. But what are they? Are they gold, silver, or precious stones? No! they are wood and thatch only! They have the name of Christ upon their tongue readily; they are tolerably regular in the ordinances of God's house; they exclaim against open wickedness and immorality; but their lives do not at all suit with the excellency of their profession :—they do not shine as lights in the world. They are persons who make a professed acknowledgment of their expectation of being justified only by faith in Jesus Christ, while they are secretly trusting to their own good works. They assemble amongst God's true people, and pretend to be trusting only to Christ :—but I will not say pretend, for that would seem to involve a known and deliberate act of hypocrisy in using words and making a profession which they know does not suit them—therefore I will not say pretend. But they are persons, who, while they make their profession of faith in Jesus Christ, and think that they make it sincerely, and say they are influenced by spiritual motives, and are living in expectation of the glory that is to be revealed, yet act in a way which plainly shews that they are living wholly and entirely to the world. They consider the profession of religion which they make, and acknowledge to be very proper, to be enough. It saves them from the charge of being infidels and blasphemers, and ensures a reception in respectable society : for it is a fact that, in the present day, in this country, if a man be

a reviler of religion, and scoffs at, and treats it with contempt, no respectable society will cordially receive him ; therefore it becomes a matter of advantage, and character, and even of moral necessity, that a man should profess, in some degree, his respect for religion. Now these persons think that, being built upon the true foundation, they are a part of God's house or building ; but their notion of that building is only a mean erection—a mere temporary shed, to shelter from the rain and wind, as it were, of being charged as irreligious neglectors of God—infidels and blasphemers. Brethren, I repeat it, this notion of God's house founded on Christ is not the idea of the true substantial building of beauty ; it is a poor wooden hovel, built only for the present season, and will not stand the test of fire. Its connexion with the glorious building is much the same as that which exists between the various sheds, raised up for temporary convenience in the precincts of a great construction, and the Palace itself which is being built : they arise out of the general arrangement of the building—they serve a present purpose—they are tolerated by the eye that regards the work in progress, because they are, at the time, a necessary adjunct ; but when the building shall be completed they must all come down, even if the accidents incident to such a work have not before destroyed them.

Oh ! my brethren, if this be the case, with what power does the warning of the apostle come to the minister who is striving to add to God's building. It is impossible for him to know whether any of his people are empty professors, the wood and thatch ; or whether they are real spiritual worshippers, gold, and silver, and precious stones. What then ! is the minister answerable for the state of the people that he admits into the Church ? Did I not tell you, brethren, that the apostle does not say, take heed *who*, or take heed *what* you build, but “ let every man take heed *how* he buildeth

thereupon." And here lies the power of the application to ourselves—to each one of us individually. God has wisely and mercifully withheld from man the power of the discerning of spirits, which He has reserved to Himself. Therefore I will not—I dare not—and praised be God that He does not expect me to make the separation of the wheat and the tares,—to say which is which. God has sent His ministers forth to cast the gospel net into the sea of the world, and to gather of every sort, both bad and good: and my duty is to cast that net over you, and when that whole gospel net shall be full, and not before, will it be drawn to shore, and then will the separation be made. In the mean time, I cannot, I dare not, I would not if I could, attempt it as regards my portion of the Church. God having declared this very plainly in His word, sends His ministers forth to try and gather all into Christ's Church, to be added to the building of His house.

The minister is to tell you that Christ has died on the cross for you; that He came into the world to save sinners; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John iii. 16) and to invite you to come and *join yourselves* to His Church. Then besides this the Lord Jesus Himself has given certain marks by which He requires those who receive His salvation to shew forth their faith. For instance, He says, "he that believeth and *is baptized* shall be saved." A person becomes, by baptism, added to the building. A man, however, may hear this, and say he believes, but may refuse to be baptized: he may sit still and fold his arms and care not for the Gospel; and when the building of God is brought before him he may say, "I see it—it is a very fair building—very beautiful; I see what is going on, but I will have nothing to do with it;" and, brethren, neither shall he have any thing to do with it; for the Lord Jesus Christ has said, "he that believeth and *is baptized* shall be saved." Baptism is an engagement, a mark, an out-

ward test given by Christ ; and if any man refuse this test, he thereby refuses to have any thing to do with the building.

Then follows an outward manifestation of His love brought closely home to the evidence of our senses—the Communion of the Lord's Supper—"Take, eat, this is my body," says Christ. This is another outward mark and test : and these two the Church of Christ has ordered should be placed before all those persons who become her members ; and with prayer, that the hearts of all the people may be effectually touched by them. And these are the means by which the materials of God's building are gathered together ; by which persons are placed outwardly as members of Christ's Church : they profess that they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and take these outward tests, or ordinances—baptism, and the Communion of the Lord's Supper.

If it were said in the text, let every man take heed *who* he buildeth thereupon, it would authorize me to take every person before admitting him to the Communion, and closely try him till I could say, "you are," or "you are not a Christian ;" "I will, or I will not admit you." But it is not "take heed *who*," but "*how* ;" and therefore all that God or the Church require of me, is to preach the Gospel plainly to you—to tell you what that Gospel requires of you—what it expects and demands of all who profess to believe it ; that it is necessary, in the first place, that you should give up any trust in your own righteousness—that you should cling only to the Lord Jesus Christ by faith—that it requires you to be different from the world—to become a peculiar person—one zealous of good works—that you should not only put your whole trust in Jesus Christ, but also that you should make your acknowledgment of Him in the way He has appointed ; and that there are many plain and practical tokens by which His people are marked and known.

The Church of Christ, my beloved brethren, is manifested

in the dark world by the light which it sets up : the people of Christ, the members of that Church, are manifested in the world, not only by the profession that they make, however high and holy it may be, but by the whole course of their living in society. The Church then, I say, places this Gospel, and its requirements, both in profession and practice, before you, and says, ' Now you see what Christ has done for you, and what He requires of His people. Will you come and be baptized into His Church? Will you, being a member, receive the pledge which He has given you? Will you come to His table?' And then, to guard against hypocrisy and deceit, as much as it is possible to do, the Church administers an oath to all who do profess to believe ; and this oath is worded as strongly and solemnly as possibly, in order that no one may force himself through, and come falsely, who has any conscience of truth : and so solemnly is this done, that none can come ; except indeed, as St. Jude says, those who are spots in your feasts. And if a man harden his heart, so that he will venture to come among the people of God, and hypocritically take the oath that the Church administers to him, in spite of all the warnings that accompany it, you cannot then keep him out. Nothing will be sharp enough to touch his hard heart—to penetrate his seared conscience ; and so he comes and makes his profession, and takes the outward test. But presently the Lord will come, and he will perish. This being the case, the " how " in the text explains the minister's duty : if I come to you, and bring before you the true foundation, and preach the Gospel ever so plainly, and ever so faithfully, and yet make no difference as to the mode of applying it—suggest to your minds and hearts no test—nothing by way of proving to yourselves that you know what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for you, and what the Gospel requires of you : then, while the foundation is laid, I do *not* take heed how I build thereupon.

Through the grace of God every minister may take heed *how* he builds, though he cannot tell *who*: and the Church of Christ established in this country requires of her ministers to take heed how they build upon the foundation which she lays. The ministers of the Church are the means of forming the building—of gathering the materials together. The Church in this parish, and all over this country, is the body of Communicants, and none other. The Gospel is preached, the outward marks, or tests, are offered, and people come to be joined by them to the outward body of Christ's people—to be added as materials to the building. They may be wood, hay, and stubble only: we cannot decide what they are, because we cannot see their hearts. But what does the Church of England say? How does she enable her ministers to take heed how they build and add to her numbers? Upon every occasion before administering the Communion, all persons professing to join as materials in the building are called upon to try and *examine themselves* diligently, to judge whether they are “gold; silver, and precious stones,” or only “wood, hay, and stubble.” If you find you have the marks and character of the gold, silver, and precious stones, then come and be fed at the Lord's table: but beware, says the Church, if any of you be a blasphemer of God; that is, if you are one who comes and sits and hears and joins in worship, and then goes forth and forgets God, and speaks against Him, giving way to foolish conversation in which the name of God is irreverently used, and the word of God, or his ministers, are treated as matters to be mocked at—you are wood, hay, and stubble, and then the Church adds, “*come not to that holy Communion.*”

Again, if you are a hinderer and slanderer of God's word—if any one of you be an adulterer, a fornicator, an unclean person—if any of you are living in malice or envy, quarrelling with your neighbours and harbouring a revengeful feeling against any one whatever; or be living in any other grievous

crime—then, says the Church, we warn you, we entreat you, to repent of your sins; but if you do not, then *come not* to that holy Communion. If you do, it is at the peril of your own soul; and thus the minister is forbidden to let any people come to the table of the Lord without first teaching them to sift their own consciences. Judas was at the Lord's table, and he took the bread, but would not wait for the wine; he gave fresh power to the devil, who entered into him, and hurried him forth to perform the wicked purpose that was in his heart. So the Church says, if any one of you be in one of the states before mentioned, “*come not, lest after having taken that holy sacrament the devil enter into you, as he entered into Judas, and fill you full of all iniquity, and bring to destruction both body and soul.*”

Now then, my brethren, we are in a condition to see the way in which this warning—“let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon,” applies to the minister. Let him take heed that after having preached the Gospel he is not to think that he has done; but let him use every means, in season and out of season, to put the people in the way of sifting and examining themselves, and of finding out their own state, so that the wood, and the hay, and the stubble, may not come and be placed on the foundation only to be burnt up and destroyed in the trial by fire. Therefore the minister is to use the word of God, as a two-edged sword, and as a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart: and to exhort the “gold, silver, and precious stones,” diligently to try themselves by it, and to examine into their hearts, so that they may be enabled to stand before Christ, who sitteth as a refiner and purifier of silver. He is to exhort the members of the Church not to rest satisfied with an outward profession—with having a part of a religious character only. In a heathen land, my brethren, the Christian religion is not tolerated at all: in a heathen land true religion is not known; and there, a man

may obtain a moral character without it. But in a Christian country, where the religion of Christ is known and acknowledged as the basis of the law of the land, as it is in England, there must be (as I have had occasion to remark already) a religious profession, in some degree or other, in every person who enters into society. Nobody can be respectable in England who mocks at religion : to ensure a good character there must be something religiously decent. Therefore persons attend the ordinances of religion ; and stand up and repeat the creed ; and bow the head at the name of Jesus ; and call themselves Christians. But, my beloved brethren, this is not enough ; and persons who have made up their minds to rest satisfied with this, are not the true, solid, precious materials that will bear the fire—such are wood, hay, stubble. The great difficulty is, that these persons will tolerate any *preaching* of the Gospel : they will acknowledge that it is very right and true. There are many who will do more than this ; for if a minister does not preach the Gospel they will protest against him, and will say his doctrine is not true. But though they will tolerate the preaching of the Gospel, I can tell you what they will not tolerate : they will not tolerate that the minister should use the word of God as a sieve, and put them into it, and sift them : they will not tolerate that the minister should make the preaching of the Gospel necessarily personal in its application. I do not mean personal in that sense which points out the sins of one person in the congregation so that they may be known by others ; but personal in that sense in which each person is made to see the application of the matter individually to himself. They will not tolerate the laying open of their own hearts to themselves, nor to have the veil torn away from them. They will not be pleased with an Account such as that I sent round the parish when I began this course of instruction ; and which invites them to search in it, in order to find their own cases.

They will not tolerate the taking that Account to pieces, because it is too defined, and shews them where they are wrong; and it makes them see that they are not quite so correct, and such good people as they thought themselves. They will no more tolerate this than they would to have the defects of a favourite, though ill-constructed hovel pointed out, while they are trying to make it look like a palace.

Of the people of this parish and congregation there are some who will most assuredly be saved, and be with Christ for ever. Praised be God that I can speak with such comfort and confidence. On the other hand, of the people of this parish and congregation, there are some, I will not say that will assuredly perish; but who, I greatly fear, will perish for ever. I do not tell you who they are in either case: I will not even tell myself; for I cannot, I dare not say what is in the heart of any; God forbids my doing this, and He says to me, and to every one of His ministers, Go on building—add the increasing materials—go on preaching the Gospel—go on throwing the net: but He adds, “take heed *how* you go on.” He says, “Leave the separation to me; I will separate the precious from the vile:” the minister therefore, my brethren, dare not make the division. But can he help having an anxious thought about you, and many fears, lest he should find in the day of trial that some may turn out to be tares whom he had thought to be true wheat? I ask, can I hinder these thoughts arising in my mind? these feelings in my heart? It is contrary to nature not to think, and hope, or tremble about you individually, secretly; and sometimes to say to myself, oh! is there not a Judas amongst them? It is my duty plainly to put before you the marks of the character of God’s people, and the marks of the character of those who do not belong to Him, in order that you may try, and examine yourselves thereby. The Church commands me, whenever you are about to

come to the holy communion, to call upon you to look well into your hearts, "and that not lightly and after the manner of dissemblers with God." And if you find the marks of Christ's people in yourselves, then, in God's name I bid you come to the Lord's table. Come; for you are the living stones of which His building is being erected.

A minister of Christ ought never to preach the Gospel without enabling each of his hearers to make it a personal matter to themselves, and be led to say, How do I stand in this building of God? My beloved brethren! you will find out in the great day, that those persons who make the preaching of the Gospel a personal matter to themselves, are the only persons who will be eternally saved. Let me ask you, do you like to hear this sort of preaching? do you like to have the truth brought personally home to you? or, do you shrink from it when it comes close? How do you like to have your own hearts laid open to yourselves? do you think that you are the "gold, silver, and precious stones?" or the "wood, the hay, and the stubble?" You all profess to be christians,—to be built on the true foundation; now what are your fruits? Do not deceive yourselves about this. Are your habits of life and tone of feelings such as correspond with the profession of faith that you have made in the service of to-day? Is it the one desire of your heart to be like Christ? Are your desires and your affections set on things above? Is the glory of Christ the one aim you have in all things? St. Paul says, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. viii. 14.) Are you obeying the leading of the Spirit of God? Are you longing for the coming of the Lord? Are you looking forward to the day when He shall come, and "change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according

to the working of His mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself?" (Phil. iii. 21.) Are you expecting when He shall appear to be like Him? Remember, these are scriptural expectations: do they constitute your prospect? If such be the tone of your mind, then, beloved brethren, your desire shall be fulfilled—your expectation shall be realised; you will be found to be "gold, silver, or precious stones" when the building shall be finished. Take courage, and go onward; I too will take courage, and thank God for you.

But, on the other hand, I must ask every one of you is your religion of a different kind to this? Is it a religion that you leave behind you in the church porch? Is it that sort of religion that you put on when you are in serious company? that which will save you from the shame of being called irreligious? that which covers you from the suspicion of being thought a despiser of religion; and procures you a respectable character in society? Oh! brethren, if this be all, according to your notion Christ's Church must be a poor little wooden house—slightly built—covered with thatch—a hovel that will very easily be burnt down. It is for time alone; it is built for the world only; it has nothing substantial about it; it just serves for the present season, but it will soon be swept away. And in the day when God's glorious building shall be completed, it will not be wanted; it was merely a temporary shed, such as are seen about great buildings while they are in progress; none but a fool could mistake them for the palace itself. All you have had to do, in carrying forward the great work of God's building, has been to form part of such a temporary shed. You are but a plank or a post in this temporary tene-ment. If it has screened you from the rain of scandal—sheltered you from the charge of being an infidel,—gained you respect in society—well: verily you have your

reward; but the day of fiery trial comes, and your thatched cottage will be consumed in the fire. Is this your state? Is this your notion of Christ's Church? If so, you are only "wood, hay, and stubble."

My beloved brethren, I do entreat you—I implore you—do not turn away from this close sifting examination of yourselves. You will remember that, in the beginning of this discourse, I told you I entered upon this part of the subject with trembling, lest any of you should stifle the workings of your conscience, and put away the application from you. Remember,—I say not of any one among you, that you *are* wood, hay, or stubble; yea, I strive not even to think of any one amongst you as being in this condition. But while this is the case, the warning of the text, "take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon," makes it my peremptory duty to put the truth before you in such a way as to make you prove your own selves, to find out whether you are "gold, silver, and precious stones," or "wood, hay, and stubble." If after all, when I have done this, you should falsely declare yourselves members of Christ's Church, without examining yourselves whether you be in the faith, or with the love of any sin whatever secretly wrapped up in your hearts, then your blood will not be required at my hands: and may the Lord God have mercy upon you. Remember that this can only be applied to those who by communion declare themselves materials for God's building. We do not want numbers at the Lord's table—it is not the many that we desire to bring. Oh! yes it is! we would have you all spiritual members of Christ's Church. Would to God that there were not one person in the parish who was not a lively member of it—a living stone in the building of God. But we do not want a number of mere outward professors; we do not want one false stone—no wood, nor thatch. For my own part, I would rather that the Church here were only

a dozen communicants out of the whole parish, if only their lives proved that God was dwelling in them by His Spirit—if only they shone with the brightness of gold and silver before the dark world—if only they proved themselves to be really children of God, walking in the world so that all might see the image of Jesus reflected in them as in a glass;—than I would see all the adults in the parish communicants, without taking heed how they were built upon the foundation. And now may we all of us go forth desirous of really proving and examining ourselves, to ascertain what we are: whether we are indeed “gold, silver, precious stones;” or only “wood, hay, stubble.”

LECTURE V.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 13.

Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

VII. We will now proceed to the seventh point of the interesting comparison we are considering; namely, The proving of the Building. May the Holy Spirit of God, without whom the truth of God's word cannot be made manifest, mercifully be with us. May He enable His appointed minister to set forth that truth in wisdom, in power, and in affection; and may He write it upon the hearts of all the people, that they may receive the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel. May God, for Christ's sake, give us the Holy Spirit.

In opening this part, I would desire you to remember that which I have so constantly urged upon your attention; that there is not a more dangerous custom amongst professing Christians, than a light, and, what may be called, a slovenly way of reading the Bible. It is one of the many devices by which Satan deceives persons into the notion that they know the truth, because they have read certain portions of Scripture; slightly skimming over the surface as it were, without taking the pains to dig deeply into it, and dwell upon it, to know what the mind of God is.

I beseech you to bear in mind, that the words of our God are weighty words—not one of them is lightly written,

neither may they be lightly passed over. It could not be that any particular word should be dwelt upon, and repeated by the Spirit of God, were it not that it was meant to be well attended to, as conveying some particular meaning and manifestation of the mind and will of God. With this warning let us now consider this 13th verse; "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." I need not, I feel assured, delay you to shew again that "the workmen" means every minister of the Gospel—every one that has followed after the original master-builders, going into all the world, and preaching the Gospel to every creature. Every minister's *work* then shall be made manifest. It is of great importance to understand rightly the word "work:" it is very probable that many persons have been in the habit of reading this Scripture, as if it were every man's "*materials*" shall be made manifest: and yet as soon as I suggest the thought, you at once perceive that the "work" of the builder, and "the materials" used in his work, are very different. It is not the *materials* that are here spoken of as being made manifest, but it is the *work* that shall be made manifest. The individuals forming the Church are the materials—the different stones in the building—gathered "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Rev. v. 9.) The *work* is the mode and manner of taking these different materials, and placing them in their proper position in the building: it means the ministerial labour—the pastoral superintendence—the self-denying, watchful care over the people;—the faithfulness in warning, and the unwearied endeavours to bring them all as faithful partakers of the Lord's table. This is the minister's *work*; and every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it. To make this appear plainly, suppose I were to employ an architect—a master-builder, to build a house for me, and

were to say to him, "there is a quarry full of stone, and there is a forest full of timber: these are the materials; take care how you erect the house with them." When I came to see the house and examine it, if I were to say, "your work is not well done," you would not think that I meant the materials were bad, but, the labour was not well executed. I have made use of this illustration in order to carry out the comparison we are considering in a plain manner to your minds. Remember then the text does not say every man's *materials* shall be made manifest; but every man's *work*. That the materials shall be made manifest is a very different thing: it is a truth elsewhere stated for another purpose, not connected with the subject we are considering. The object of the Apostle in this chapter is to place the *work* of the minister in its proper point of view; and therefore he says the minister's *work* shall be made manifest. Observe then the entire consistency of Scripture language. If it had been before said take heed *who* you build, or take heed *what* you build; then indeed it would have referred to the materials, and they would have been mentioned in the text: but I have already shewn you that it was before said, "take heed *how*" you build. And then, in consistency with this view of the subject, we find in the 13th verse, "every man's work shall be made manifest;" that is, every man's *manner* of building—every man's *mode* of placing the materials together—the way in which every minister fulfils the command, "go; and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"—the way in which his heart has yearned over his people, "travailing in birth again until Christ be formed in them," and they are brought forth as the children of the living God.

And now let us proceed to the next part of this subject; "Every man's work *shall be made manifest*, for the day shall

declare it; because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." "Shall be made manifest." One common notion derived from this text affords an instance of the unsearching manner in which many persons read the Scriptures:—not only those who are altogether careless as to the true and spiritual meaning, but often also the really well meaning and right-minded; whence it happens that mistaken views and half-formed ideas are taken up on religious matters. It may be that many amongst us—perhaps all of us at some time or other—have read this text, and thought that the "day" and the "fire" could relate to no other than the day of judgment, and the fire of eternal condemnation. That every man's work will be manifested at the judgment day is perfectly true, whether of the ministers or of the people; the work in each individual soul will be manifested indeed: but that is another truth stated in Scripture under other circumstances. So far as the "work" includes the materials, a general application of the great Scripture truth (Luke xii. 1—3) may be permitted to be drawn from these words; and in both points of view this great truth is stated in Scripture, in order to make all who profess to be the people of God look well into their own hearts to see whether they are, or are not His people:—it is stated to warn the wicked—to alarm hollow professors, and to make them know that it is not saying, Lord, Lord, that will satisfy Christ—that many will in that day say, we have eaten and drunk at thy table, and attended the preaching of thy Gospel, to whom the Lord will say, "I never knew you, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity." (Luke xiii. 27.) Oh! my beloved brethren, it is awfully true that all will be manifest at the judgment day. Fearful will be the disclosures then made; and it is the fearfulness of that day, and the great truth that then every thing will be laid open and clear which makes the warning of the Apostle come with overwhelming power upon the

heart of every minister, "let every man take heed *how* he buildeth." All this, brethren, is perfectly true, but it is not the present truth brought forth in this text. In this Scripture we are told that every man's work shall be made manifest: his manner of building shall appear clearly as in the daylight: and the Apostle declares one mode of this manifestation, and tells the means by which every minister's work—his faithfulness to his charge—his manner of gathering his people into the Church, shall be made to appear as clear as in the day. The mode assigned is this—"because it shall be revealed (unveiled, exposed) by fire:" or, as it is in the margin of the Bible, "*it is revealed*" (the Greek word is in the present tense.) It is quite true that fire is used by our Lord as the comparison (if it be a comparison) to express the eternal suffering of the ungodly hereafter in the place "where the fire is not quenched." Three times is this repeated with awful solemnity by our Lord, in the 9th chapter of St. Mark's gospel. Who can read these repetitions without shuddering? "Where the fire is not quenched." As therefore this state is described by fire, it may be supposed by some, that the day of the revelation by fire and manifestation of "every man's work" spoken of in our text may be the same. But, my brethren, is the fire of hell a fire of trial? does it lay open the excellency of the good? In what part of Scripture is it stated that the fire of hell is either a trying, a proving, a purifying, or a glorifying fire? Is it not always spoken of as an eternal fire?—a fire that never can be quenched? The Romanists have indeed imagined a notion that there is a purifying fire, which they call purgatory, and speak of it as a short hell: but this is a wicked delusion: for the word of God tells but of everlasting fire, never to be quenched. Yes; never quenched! there is nothing to follow after—no change of condition—no means of alleviating its misery. For when once a soul—a soul especially who has been at any time laid upon

the true foundation, Jesus Christ—one who has cried, Lord! Lord! but has lived to the world, to the flesh, and to the devil—when, I say, such a one comes to condemnation, and finds out his unspeakable folly—the utter madness of his conduct—and the wretchedness, the misery of his condition; when he has not only found this out, but has bitterly experienced ten millions of years in the torments of hell, he will still prove the truth of the written word of God, that “the fire is not quenched.” Therefore, my beloved brethren, it is clear this cannot be a trying, or a purifying, or a glorifying fire.

The fire spoken of in the text, as the fire which “shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is,” must be an instrumentality to prove the nature of every minister’s building. It is such a fire that shall put closely to the test, and unveil the work of every minister, of what sort it is—good or bad. The Lord orders or permits circumstances to occur which prove what sort of profession the people whom the minister is adding to the Church (as materials to a building,) are making—what sort of people the Communicants in each parish are—whether they are polished after the similitude of a palace—shining brightly in the dark world of sin; though the fire burn ever so fiercely around them, only making their graces sparkle more brilliantly: or on the other hand, whether their profession is a mere name—their notion of the Church a wooden thatched shed—one which, when the fire touches it, is soon consumed, and the place thereof knoweth it no more. You must, I think, my brethren, perceive, upon a due consideration of the latter part of this text, that the meaning of the whole may be thus stated.

Every minister’s mode of conducting the ministry of the Gospel, and thus adding materials to God’s building, shall be made clearly to appear—as clearly as the sun at noonday (for the day shall declare it,) and that shall happen, too, even in

this present life. Professing Christians shall be exposed to trials, and distresses, and persecutions, it may be, which shall bring to the test every minister's work, whether he has used sufficient care with his people—whether he has been satisfied with having delivered the truth to them, and then has allowed them to deceive themselves with a notion that because they have sat still and heard, therefore they are Christians;—or whether he will not let them settle down and rest in error; but try by every means to make the word reach home to the heart personally, that they may examine themselves, and see whether their profession be a true one, and not merely a feint and falsehood, told to the face of God, in the place where His honour dwelleth—an empty profession of high and heavenly truths, never duly considered: or on the other hand, a profession duly weighed in the mind, and embraced with a full desire of acting out its principles, as a Christian ought to do.

Oh! my beloved brethren! if this be the meaning of this text, may we not exclaim with the Apostle, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. ii. 16.) Can any who believe this venture to say, that a minister is too strong in his statements?—too earnest—too personal—too sifting?—going too far, because he presses these searching truths upon them? Have you ever thought this of your minister? Oh! read this text again and again; and when you go home, go aside and pray for him, and rather mourn that he does so little compared with what this lost world requires—to sift closely every soul amongst you; that when he sees his people making their outward profession at the table of the Lord, he may hope that, in the testing and proving, none may be found wood, hay, or stubble only; that none may come without well knowing what they are about, and without having their hearts laid open to themselves, and their consciences sifted—for this is all he can do, as he may not decide and say

authoritatively which is wood, and which is gold, silver, or precious stones.

In the Scriptures we have very clear statements of what this trial by fire is. Statements that will fully prove that the day, in which the minister's work shall be tried by fire, means a time in this present life. Look, for instance, to 1 Pet. i. 7. "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be *tried with fire*, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." Tried, you observe, with fire, *before* the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. And what is that fire? Look to the verse before—"Ye greatly rejoice," says St. Peter, "though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations". Manifold trials—manifold temptations—this is the *fire* that he speaks of. Again, look to the 4th chapter of the same Epistle, and the 12th verse. "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." Here, then, a fiery trial is spoken of, and is also called a partaking of Christ's sufferings. And what are these sufferings? How can we be said to suffer with Christ, or partake of his sufferings? Is it not the taking up His cross in the midst of an ungodly world—suffering for His name's sake—being reproached for the name of Christ. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part He is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. "But," the Apostle adds, "let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busy-body in other men's matters; yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this

behalf. For the time is come that judgment (the fiery trial) must begin at the house of God (that is, the building): and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (1 Pet. iv. 14—17.) Here, then, we have the fire very clearly explained. But again, take the 12th chapter of St. Luke. There Christ says, "I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled." And then He shews us what that fire is—that it is the effect of the preaching of His Gospel,—trials, distresses, separations, and divisions taking place in families, just because some will receive that Gospel—will profess their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and will come and be built upon Him as the true foundation—because they will prove the sincerity of their professions too, by lifting up a light, a bright shining light, before the other members of the family, which secretly condemns them, and puts them to shame, because they sparkle before them as gold, silver, and precious stones. Hear what Jesus himself says, and how He explains this separating, trying fire, in the 49th verse—"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Have you got hearts, brethren, to feel this—this describes FIRE? Do you understand this? or is it a strange thing to you? Look again to the 3rd chapter of Malachi, 2nd verse. This was spoken when Malachi was prophesying of that appearing of Christ by which He came

to the Temple in His day of humiliation. "He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap. And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Jesus, my brethren, is a refiner's fire; He sits like a purifier and refiner of silver, to purify His people. Once more, look to Jeremiah, xxiii. 28. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord; is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Here, then, the word of God is called a fire: the piercing power of that word by which it searches the secrets of the heart—that is the fire. I have carried you through these texts, my beloved brethren, that you may see the Scriptural meaning of the expression we are considering—"it is unveiled by fire, for the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." If you will take the trouble to search the Bible for yourselves, you will find much more bearing upon the same point.

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is preached—a minister comes into a parish, and says, "This is the word of God, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved: I am commissioned to come and tell you that Jehovah himself has laid a sure foundation stone for you to be built on. He has given His own beloved Son to be that precious stone; and the Apostles have come and laid it instrumentally—the building is begun—the Church is going on—the walls are rearing—your souls are the materials—come and be built upon Him, and be added to the Church—you are the materials for whom Christ sends His ministers as builders,—come and be placed as polished stones on the building that is going on." Christ sends His servants forth—"Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;" and this has been

re-echoed by the mouth of Peter. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts ii. 38, 39.) And Christ has waited even to the time of this generation, and the building is not yet completed—His ministers are still sent forth to carry on the building. But it has not pleased God to give them the power which would make them responsible for the materials, any more than an architect is responsible for the quality of materials which have been allotted to him wherewith to build: for the materials are "living stones;" and as intelligent beings, upon them is placed the essential responsibility. But while he is not responsible for them, he may test this stone, and try that piece of timber, and he may force those who are responsible to test themselves. This is what the minister is charged to do. Brethren, when I was sent to you to seek after your souls, a solemn act was performed; you indeed, were not present, but God was; and some of the members of His Church. I knelt down, and in the presence of God received a charge to go forth and search for Christ's people here in this parish, and build up His Church; and the whole of the people were given to me wherewith to work. I come then, and I preach to you. I place the truth as it is in Jesus before you—I administer the rule and order of the visible Church to you—that Church requires you to make a profession in the mode appointed by Christ himself—she requires from you a personal statement concerning yourself; so Scriptural—so pure—so high—so holy, that it would clearly evidence the working of the Holy Spirit in you, if indeed you make this profession truly. You come to the worship of God—you declare yourselves poor miserable sinners—you say you have no health in you, and thus profess to feel what

the Holy Spirit first works in the heart of His people. He convinceth them of sin—you make a deep and humbling confession of sin. You come to the table of the Lord, and declare that you put no trust in your own righteousness—that you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and look for salvation only through the great atonement which He has made. You ask for the Holy Spirit to help you, and to enable you to overcome sin, the world, and the devil:—you declare your desire to live as the children of God. And in belief of the sincerity of this, I kneel down with you, and we supplicate God together, and as one body partake of the pledge of the Lord. Now if this your statement be true—if this profession come from your heart, (and God knows whether it does, but I know not) then you are indeed the glorious materials for building God's house—the gold, the silver, and precious stones. If it be not true, then what words shall I use—how shall I express myself, to declare to you the awful load of aggravated condemnation that you are heaping upon your own heads? Can anything be conceived parallel to it? If you were to go to a man and make a high profession of friendship: call upon him for the purpose of stating your allegiance; and say this or that, in order to influence him to do a certain favour for you; if you were to make important promises to him, when all the while you had no serious intentions about the matter, and were merely expressing words that were no bonds in your mind; I say, would you not feel covered with shame when your recklessness and deceit were discovered? Now the Church requires her ministers to make every one of her people confess the truth of God: they are to take care that the people understand what they are about: they are forbidden to administer the sacraments of admission and continuance until the people have been made, every one of them, to declare that they are miserable sinners—that they know they must perish without Christ—that they believe in

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost—until they, in short, profess to know and believe all that a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health. Such a profession we have made to-day. Brethren, has your mind gone along with it? has your heart consented to it? If your mind has wandered, and you grieve over its wandering, that is an infirmity. But I mean, has your mind understood and your heart substantially agreed to all that has been said to God in this house to-day? This is a sifting question, but I beseech you to consider it well. If this be not the case, what benefit do you expect to receive from coming here, and repeating certain empty and unmeaning sounds? Some people seem to consider the Church to be a sort of incorporated society for mutual assurance against the condemnation of hell. They look upon their baptism as a kind of policy; a formal and official act of the body, in virtue of which all risk of future perdition is taken away, upon condition of a periodical payment of services, ordinances, and external compliances on their parts. Do you think that your profession will save you? They indeed are safe who, being built upon the true foundation, prove, by their outward conduct, the reality and truth of the profession they make. What man can join in that which we have said to-day, and truly mean it as in the presence of God, unless he is moved by the Holy Ghost? But, Satan comes, brethren, and under his bewildering influence over the natural heart, it is possible for persons to do that in the presence of God, which they would shudder to do in the presence of man,—solemnly to profess unfelt things; and to deceive themselves—even themselves—by the profession. And as this is the case, there must be a trial by fire. When the fire comes it will be seen what kind of professors you are; whether materials of that class which will bear the fire, or of that which will burn and be consumed under it.

Now, my brethren, try yourselves. When you are reproached for the name of Christ—reviled and derided for acting upon your profession, and living according to your own public prayers: when you are mocked for your overmuch religion, as it is called; how do you bear this? It is a part of the fiery trial which is to try and prove you; do you bear the fire? does it only more plainly reveal to yourself that you have a solid ground of comfort, a peace inwardly that cannot be taken away from you? Or does the trial, on the other hand, make you shrink, give way, and turn from your profession; or agree to make some compromise with the world? If this be the effect the fire has upon you, it is clear as day that you are only wood, hay, stubble. Again; you attend the preaching of the Gospel, and consent to it in general terms; but presently the word pierces to the heart; it comes close home, and you are called to do something which the word and your conscience tell you to be right; but which if you do it, will expose you to trial, and difficulty, and opposition. You are required to take up the cross, and follow Christ, and to glorify Him in the fire. Well! do you bear the fire? do you follow Christ, shining brightly in the midst of the trial? If you do, you are the gold, silver, and precious stones. Again; the word is preached, your hearts are laid open, and you see that you must attend to it; if not, you must stop your ears closely against it, and harden your hearts, and go out and follow the devices of Satan. Or the word comes too close, and you get angry because you cannot escape it; you go out, and you resist, or deny it. Then the word has come like a fire, and you cannot bear it: you are wood, hay, stubble. Once more; you are members of the outward and visible Church, and think yourselves part of God's building: but the fire comes to try you. Satan is allowed to come with a fire of temptation, and you cannot stand it; you give way, and yield, and excuse it. Oh! then, it is clear as day what you are. Or when the

Lord, by His providence, Himself puts you in the fire of trial, by cutting at the root of your affections;—He takes away the desire of your eyes with a stroke;—causes circumstances to occur by which you are placed in deep poverty, and tried by the pinchings of distress:—or your character is slandered: for Jesus shews Himself in a thousand ways, sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver. Now, if when under any of these trials—this fire which is to try you—you say, I am too much distressed to attend to religion—I cannot think of my soul, my troubles are too heavy—then it is clear as day that you are not the gold, silver, and precious stones:—you cannot bear the fire that is to prove you. You may place yourself along with the other materials; you may take the bread and the wine; but you are perishable materials, not able to stand the fire. Think (in the last place) of that fearful fire in the 12th chapter of St. Luke—the fire of divisions among the members of a family. Has the word of God touched the heart of some in your family? and do you put your hand to stir up and increase the division? Do you oppose, and persecute, and try to hinder the spreading of the power of religion; while the suffering one meekly bears all, and only prays for you? Oh! if this be the case, it is as clear as day that *they* are the gold, silver, and precious stones: *they* shine in the fire and endure it, and are only made the brighter by it; while you stand by, and shew yourselves to be the wood, the hay, and the stubble.

Now, my brethren, if this be true, consider, I beseech you, what a responsibility rests upon yourselves; remember it is your own profession. If you live up to the profession that you have made in this Church to-day, no doubt you are the gold, the silver, and the precious stones. I do not say, if you have gone through the whole of our services without a wandering thought: no, my dear brethren, I am too sensible of human weakness to say that. But if your heart

really desires this ; and you sincerely mourn over your shortcomings.

If, on the contrary, you come here and make your profession only according to custom, because you think it right and proper to do so ; or because it has so long been the established usage :—because you think it very well to do this on a Sunday, though you have not time to think about it, and attend to it in the week :—oh ! then, you are the wood, the hay, and the stubble : and whenever your profession is put to the test, it will be manifest as the light—it will be clear as the day, that you do not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you can make the holy and spiritual profession you have made to-day, and at the same time can live to the world ; and if I let you alone, to go on without your conscience being troubled, without making you see your case as it stands in God's word ; then the Lord have mercy upon me, for mercy indeed I should need. My duty is to put this so plainly before you, that no man, except he have a hardened and deadened conscience, (and God forbid that such should be amongst you) may go on in peace, in a life of sin, while making the high profession which the Church requires. At all events, if he does, I am bound to shew him that the responsibility is his own, and not mine : and that his blood will be upon his own head.

I told you in the very beginning of this course of instruction, that there were four classes of persons, and four classes only, in every parish. Two of these classes are persons who do not belong to the Church ; and the other two together form the visible Church. Between these latter classes we cannot decide who are and who are not the true people of God : and of these classes the Lord says, " Let both grow together until the harvest." But the minister is to work, and labour, and strive by every means in his power to make the members of the Church try and prove themselves. These are all the

Communicants : none other profess to belong to the Church. The two outward marks appointed by Christ to distinguish the members of His Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper : baptism for admission, and the Lord's Supper for continuance. And the Church, while she makes nothing else absolutely necessary for her members as outward marks, strictly requires these two. I, as the minister, am commissioned to require these two outward marks and signs ; but I am not permitted to judge according to any inward one. You then, who are Communicants, profess your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—you come to His table—declare yourselves members of His body. The foundation is laid for you ; Christ is placed before you as the Rock of Ages—the sure foundation stone ; come and be cemented to it. Here is the pledge of your Saviour's love offered to you ; come, and in the fulness of faith, receive it to the strengthening of your faith, and to the comfort of your souls. Only remember (and oh ! how shall I sufficiently urge the recollection upon you ?) you come upon your own responsibility—you come upon your own profession. If your profession be a sure one, then shall you be cemented as lively stones to the building of God :—then come and take this holy Sacrament to your comfort. If it be a false profession that you make, remember the Lord sees your heart. He knows what motive brings you to His Table ; and the Church reminds you, that in coming from a false motive, you eat and drink your own damnation, not discerning the Lord's body. May the Holy Spirit carry the truth home with power to every one of your hearts. If there be any amongst you whose heart trembles at this ; and who has a secret misgiving ; and who fears lest they should come and not be accepted of the Lord ; may the Holy Spirit guide them, that they may examine themselves, and so come to this pledge of Christ's love, and be nourished and strengthened by it. The Lord's Supper is

milk for babes, as well as strong meat for them that are of riper years. Come, my beloved brethren, to the true foundation, and settle upon it ; and may you be strengthened in faith, and hope, and joy ; and prove, in the day of fiery trial, that you are gold, and silver, and precious stones, to the glory and praise of God.

LECTURE VI.

1 CORINTHIANS iii. 14—15.

If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss : but he himself shall be saved ; yet so as by fire.

HAVING examined seven different points in the very important passage of Scripture which has been under our consideration, we are come to the two last points in that course of instruction :—the WORKMAN'S GAIN ; and the WORKMAN'S LOSS.

May the Holy Spirit of God, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy, give strength and power to His own word, and apply it to all our hearts. May He enable His minister profitably to set forth the truth ; and may He open the hearts of the people to receive the same in faith and meekness. May God, for Christ's sake, give us the Holy Spirit.

VIII. Our text tells us, that " if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." " Any man's work," you will remember, has been shewn to mean, any minister's work—his manner of laying the materials upon the foundation, and of carrying on the building towards its completion. When persons express their desire to be added to the Church of Christ, and to be placed as stones in the building ; the minister's work includes his mode

of preaching the word of God, so as to gather these fresh members, and so as to edify and prove the whole body of the Church. The foundation, Jesus Christ, is laid. He is the beginning, and the ground, and the cornerstone of the Church. Jesus Christ, the man now in heaven; upon whose death, and resurrection, and mediation, all the hopes of all the people of God entirely depend; and upon whom they are placed and cemented as living stones, by the Holy Ghost, which unites them to Christ. This foundation having been laid by God Himself, we, the succeeding builders—the appointed ministers—come to you; we tell you that Christ has offered Himself upon the cross, a sacrifice for your sins: we tell you that He is the true foundation; and we invite you to come and rest your souls upon Him; and thus we bring to the knowledge of the truth some individuals placed by God within the sphere of our ministry. We cannot choose our own materials—we know not the heart of any; and therefore the work of the minister is not to choose or reject; but to take the materials that are given to him, and to place them upon the foundation: but to do this work in such a manner as, though he dare not decide upon his own judgment whether they are gold, silver, precious stones; or wood, hay, stubble: yet so as to enable each individual to understand the position he holds, and what he himself is about. The work is to sift their hearts by the word of God; and so to press it upon their consciences, and to make it personal to each, that each must see the nature of his profession, and the truth of the matter; so that none may come ignorantly, and occupy a position upon the foundation, without being warned beforehand that a testing by fire will take place; in which, if their profession be not a real one, expressing the truth from their hearts, it will certainly be proved false, and be practically denied; it will burn as mere wood, hay, and stubble.

You see that in this comparison, as in every other by which

the greater spiritual things are represented by the lesser physical things, there is one point of incompleteness. We, the builders, cannot choose nor reject any of the materials: God has not given to us the discernment of spirits. When you come and desire to be added to the Church, we cannot say your profession is true—you mean what you say: nor, on the other hand, you do not mean what you say, and we will not receive you. No power is given to us to decide that any professing Christian (not living scandalously in open sin) is a hypocrite: we dare not pronounce this. But what we have to do, when persons come and desire to be placed as a part of the materials on the Foundation of the Church, is to shew them what ought to be the character, and what must be the motives of a real Christian, that they may know clearly upon what their spiritual Church-privileges depend; that it is upon the truth and sincerity of their own profession, and not upon any thing that can be done for them, or by them, externally and officially. By perseveringly placing this before them—by laying open their own acknowledgments and profession to themselves—by giving each individual no rest, but urging him by all and every means to search into his own heart, to see whether the words he speaks are really out of the fulness of the good treasure put into his heart by the Holy Spirit of God—by this means the workman carries on his work: by this means the gold, silver, and precious stones (being those persons who in making their profession say only what they mean and feel) are enabled habitually to try and examine themselves, and so are prepared for the fiery trial which will come upon them, that they may be only strengthened and purified in the trial, and not consumed and destroyed. On the other hand, the merely nominal professors—the formal worshippers, who attend to the services merely from custom, and because circumstances seem to require them to be religious—may be able to detect for themselves, before the hour of trial

comes, the hollowness of their profession; and detecting it, may humble themselves before God: so that they, seeing the folly of making an unmeaning profession, may heartily enter into the earnestness and spirituality of that which the Church justly and wisely requires them to make. To induce the people to do this is the object of the minister. His work is so to conduct the ministry of the word—so to press home each person's statements to his own conscience, and shew the meaning of his own profession—that self-deceived persons, and formalists, and hypocrites, may get out of the way; that they may see by *the very words* of their own declaration they do not belong to God; and knowing they ought not to say what they do not feel, they may honestly retire of their own accord, and may not spoil and mar the beauty of the glorious building. Or, on the other hand, finding that their own profession is indeed a weighty matter, and seeing that they cannot live in consistency with it without being true spiritual members of Christ's Church, they may come to God in all sincerity, entering into the full meaning of every part of what they say. Then they will be placed as firm, true, solid, and glorious materials upon the foundation; they will be prepared for the trial, and, when it comes, will shine brightly in it. Our work, brethren, then is to press upon the consciences of all who call themselves Christians—upon the ignorant and the learned—the high and the low—the full meaning of their own words, uttered with their own lips; so that they dare not continue to use them unless they be true; and if they be true, that they may continue in the full and intelligent use of them, to the comfort of their own souls, and to the reward of the minister.

And this brings us to our present part of the subject—the WORKMAN'S GAIN. "Now if any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." Abide! continue! stand the trial by fire! for the fire shall

try every man's work of what sort it is. A person who has made his profession as a member in communion with the Church goes forth into the world, and is called upon to say or to do something which he knows and feels he ought not to do, if he acts consistently with his Christian profession. To refuse, however, will bring upon him difficulty, distress, opposition, or ridicule ; and he dares not refuse—he yields to the feelings of fear and shame—he fails in the trial. Whatever may have been the correctness of his profession, in the trial that was put upon him to prove its sincerity and consistency, it fails, and shews to all the world, that the words spoken by him were not true—they never came from his heart—he does not stand the trial—his profession was only words—he is only wood, hay, stubble. But if any minister's work *abide* which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If the teaching of the word of God be so sifting, so searching to the conscience, and yet so urged upon each person's responsibility that while no member can say, " that makes *my neighbour* point at me," every one may feel that God points at him ; under this sifting, an individual member of the Church feels its power, its truth, its necessity, and its great importance, and then goes forth to the world ; and when his profession comes to be tried in the fire, opposition, difficulty, disgrace, or ridicule come upon him ; and he bears whatever may happen rather than act inconsistently as a Christian : he abides—he stands the fiery trial—his profession is proved to be true—it is plain that his words came from his heart. The enemies of Christ sally forth against him ; but the world says, we have tried him, and he will not follow us. By the flesh, with its evil desires, he has been tried, but he has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts. The devil has tried him again and again, and has met with a powerful resistance. He bears the fiery trial—holds

fast his profession—and shines as gold, silver, and precious stones, in the building of God.

“If any man’s work abide which he has built *thereupon*.” Mark the word “*thereupon* :” that is, upon the foundation—Jesus Christ. This refers only to the sifting work of a faithful preaching of Jesus Christ, and faith in him ; and not to the idle preaching of bare moral truths—not to the reprobation of broad immorality, and telling persons they must be good. Such, brethren, is not the “work” spoken of: such would be an idle teaching—a wasting of the minister’s office, and a playing with the souls of men. Such is not the “work” at all.

But the true “work” is that plain and close preaching of Christ Jesus by which each person is forced to examine himself, so that when they profess to be, not “good people,” but “Christians,” it may be because they know that they have crucified Christ, and that He has redeemed them. And when they strive to act as Christians, it may be because they trust to the power of the Holy Spirit of Christ, to work in them and with them. And when they look for and expect that help, it may be because they are resting upon Jesus Christ, who has received the Spirit for them, and who is the true and sure foundation of their hopes, and of their power.

If any man’s work so abide which he hath built thereupon, “*he shall receive a reward*.” My brethren, I desire to pause here ; because I do feel that as the subject we are now entering upon is one of the most important points, so it is also one of the most difficult subjects that a minister can bring before his people. It is one which calls for special prayer ; and needs, in a peculiar manner, the guidance of the Spirit of God. It is a subject so extraordinary, so beyond all expectation ; and yet so certainly true, so important for the people to understand ; that it behoves the minister to

watch his own heart well, while he speaks on it. "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward:" this reward is spoken of a little more fully in the 9th chapter of this same Epistle. We must observe that it is not a reward of wages, but of encouragement: not given because it was earned, but out of the free love of Him who employs us. This reward is referred to in the 9th chapter and 16th verse, thus—"Though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me." God has commanded it, and I must do it. This the Apostle knew and felt—"Yea" (he goes on to say) "woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel." And therefore you see, whether there were a reward or not, at the peril of his own soul, the minister must preach the Gospel. "For, if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward." If willingly, he has the reward, not as so much wages given for so much work done; but as a free gift. God has commanded His Gospel to be preached, and it must be done; if the heart of His minister be made willing to do it, and he cheerfully does it, then a reward is given; but "if against my will" (says the Apostle,) "a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me." He must do it, whether with, or against the will. But what is the reward? The Apostle first states that he had not used the power he possessed by taking any thing from the Corinthians for his preaching; but it was his comfort, in ministering amongst them, that he had delivered the Gospel of Christ without charge, and had not abused the power which that Gospel gave him in this respect. But for what object was all this? He declares it in the 19th verse, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant of all, *that I might gain the more*"—that he might gather more abiding souls to Christ. This was his grand object, and for which he was willing to do, or to suffer any thing. To the Jews he became as a Jew that he might *gain* them. To those that

were under the law, as under the law, that he might *gain* them. To them that were without law (to the heathen) he would do or become any thing he conscientiously could, that he might *gain* them: to the weak he would become as weak, that he might *gain* the weak; yea he became all things to all men, that by all means he might save some—that he might save souls, (1 Cor. ix. 19—22.) What then was the reward, upon which his eye and his heart was fixed? Turn to 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20. “What is our hope or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and joy.” Again, he says of his converts to the Lord, “ye are our rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (2 Cor. i. 14.) We are told in Dan. xii. 3, that “they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” There are a great many other texts of scripture explaining this same point, which I will not stop to bring before you now. But I would very earnestly beg of you to make those that I have mentioned serve merely as an index to assist you, when you go home, in looking into the word of God for yourselves to find others like them. Just, however, let us look to the 1st Chapter of the Romans, and the 13th verse; there we find St. Paul expressing his earnest desire to see them that he might gain some of their souls. “I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you (but was let hitherto), that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.” So then we find the great object of the Apostle Paul—one of the master-builders—was to use every consistent means, and to become all things to all men, and to do any thing, if after all, by any means he might gain souls; because God of His infinite mercy and free love has promised a reward to the ministers; and that reward is to be according to the number of souls they shall have gathered and placed

upon the true foundation—who have been tried in the fire and have borne it; and have proved in the end to be gold, silver, and precious stones:—permanent, solid, enduring, glorious. These shall we present to the Lord at His coming, and say, “Lord! here am I and the souls whom thou hast given me.” And according to their number will be the number of the jewels in the crown of the minister, which he will place at the feet of the Saviour:—they will be his glory and joy.

This is a subject entirely overlooked by the world; but it is a subject so full of deep interest, and of joyful, yet anxious anticipation to the ministers of Christ, that no one who is taught by the Spirit of God can overlook it. Remember, brethren, this is a reward, not of wages, but of encouragement. The Lord sends His ministers forth into the world. He says, go and gather souls into the Church by the preaching of my Gospel—build them upon the foundation, and lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world. He adds, take care *how* you do this; and, to make you very earnest and diligent, as many souls as you can gather into the church by profession, and that turn out in the fiery trial which shall come upon them, to be true and spiritual members upon the foundation—cemented to it by the Holy Ghost, these shall be a crown for you, and with which you shall shine with the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars in the heavens for evermore.

It seems wonderful that a man—a poor sinner—should have to expect such things, under such promises. But if it be true (and I have shewn you, by the word of God, that it is true), then would it not be strange indeed if we were either ashamed or afraid to entertain and declare our expectations. As well, brethren, might any one who has been employed by the king of his country in some important service, and has been honoured by his master with some singular badge of

distinction, be ashamed of the royal favour, and say, I will not be called by the title conferred—I will not wear the coronet of my peerage, not the star of my order with which I have been dignified, as a free gift by my sovereign. As well might a military commander act thus, as a minister be ashamed or afraid to speak of the crown which the Lord will give to him—a crown studded with precious jewels, the redeemed souls to whom he preached the Gospel by which they were gathered into Christ's church by His Spirit—the tried ones, whose profession was not mere outward words, but the open acknowledgment of the hidden principle in the heart. Such will be jewels in the crown of the minister—his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus.

IX. But there follows a contrast in the last part of the subject: "If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." This contains the power of the application—"If any man's work shall be burned—" not in the fire of hell, as I have already shewn you, but in the fire of trial here in this present life—he shall suffer loss. If after a minister has been labouring diligently, and using all possible means to put the truth before his people—if after he has shewn them the folly of mocking God, by making an unmeant and unfelt profession; and has pressed upon their consciences the powerful meaning of the words they themselves make use of, and the inconsistency of not striving to live after the measure of their own statements:—if after he has done all this, a member in communion with the Church goes forth to the fiery trial that is arranged, or permitted, in order to try the sincerity of his profession, and by his acts denies his words; declares with his lips the power and readiness of Christ to redeem him from all sin, but under temptation says, I cannot help giving way to this sin—I must follow that wrong course or worldly custom—I shall lose so much if I do not—my business would suffer and my friends

would laugh at me, and then how/singular I should appear—I know it is contrary to my profession made in Church—I know my baptismal vow is to renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh—I know it to be consistent with that vow and promise—I must deny myself in this matter, and take up my cross and follow Christ: but then I cannot—the profession is very good, and I wish I could act up to it, but I cannot:—my brethren, such a one fails in the trial—he clearly proves that he is wood, hay, stubble. All the minister's work upon such a one has been in vain—it is burnt up—it does not abide—the minister suffers loss. What is the loss? It is the loss of a jewel; that soul will never appear as a jewel in his crown. Such a one might have gone on for a long time making his profession before the time of trial came—deceiving himself with a lie in his right hand—walking about the world with the name and profession of a Christian, while Satan surely had the dominion over him. When the Lord himself shall come, and such a one cries out, “Lord! Lord! was I not among the number of thy people? Did I not eat and drink at thy table, and make my profession of thy name?” the Lord will answer, “I never knew you—depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.” His soul will be lost, and it cannot appear as a jewel in the minister's crown. The minister shall suffer loss. How plainly it appears that after all the reward given is of free grace. It is not Paul, or Peter, or John, or any other minister, who deserves a reward in the sense of merit. Oh, no! far be it from us to think so. See them as described in the Revelation (iv. 9—11.), casting all their crowns at the feet of Jesus, and giving all the glory to Him:—but they are described as possessing crowns in order to cast them there.

But what is that which follows the disappointment of this hope? The minister will suffer loss—yet he himself shall be

saved! Yes! my beloved brethren, it is so. And if every one of the communicants in this parish were to turn out self-deceived or hypocrites (which God forbid)—if the work with respect to every one were to be burnt up in the fiery trial, and you were to renounce Christ altogether, and fall back unto perdition, it would not cause me thereby to lose my soul; but it would rob my crown of its jewels. I might be saved, and the sincerity of my own profession would be tested by this very thing. For this is the fire that tries the minister; “he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.” Some of you may be tried in one way, and some in another; the modes of trial are infinitely varied, though all who profess to be the people of God are surely tried in some way or other. And are the ministers themselves exempted? Oh! they are specially tried in many ways; and particularly when after they have been doing every thing in their power to keep their people from deceiving themselves by trusting to an outward profession, and have applied the word to them closely, they find some of them go forth; and when the trial comes upon them, give up their profession, join the world, and fall into sin. Oh, brethren! this is a fiery trial to the minister’s heart—it is an agonizing trial. He watches—he mourns—he prays—he weeps over such unhappy souls; they are lost from his crown. But it is the very fire by which the Lord is purifying and proving his own heart; and though he loses his jewels, his own soul is saved, so as by this fire. Think what it is to be one who is expecting, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, to partake of His glory; and not only to be saved himself, but is looking upon the souls of his people to be jewels in his crown, that he may “shine as the stars for ever and ever;” tenderly loving them, and in his heart yearning over them; longing for the day when they will be manifested as the sons of God, and appear as his joy: and then to find them belonging to the world that lieth in wickedness, and shewing

that which makes his heart sink within him at the thought, that after all they will not be jewels in his crown, but be lost for ever. Oh! this is an agonizing fire, a fiery trial, which none but the heart of a minister can experience. St. Paul said he travailed in birth again with his people, till Christ was formed in them. The throes of childbearing are fitly used to represent such sufferings.

There are always professing Christians who will agree to anything outward and external; and so long as things go smoothly with them, all will be well. In Communion and attendance upon ordinances they will be regular, and will concur in any thing short of self-denying consistency; for the minister to hear and know of such amongst the members of his Church; and to find that, when the fiery trial comes to them, they give way and fall into sin; and then to feel that, not only will they perish themselves, but also that a jewel is taken out of his crown—one that he hoped and prayed for, but one now in the possession of Satan—this, my beloved brethren, is a fiery trial—a trial such as none but a minister can know. The jewel is gone—the soul is lost, but the minister himself is saved: aye, and his state of salvation is tested by this fire.

My dear brethren, is this the case, or is it not? If you doubt it, say what other meaning can be discovered for the word of God, which I have brought forward to prove it? What did St. John mean when he said, “look to yourselves that *we* lose not those things which *we* have wrought, but that *we* receive a full reward?” (2 John 8). What did he mean by receiving a full reward? What do we find the Apostle Paul earnestly desiring? to gain more souls for jewels in his crown. But if this be the truth, then consider the extraordinary power with which the application of it comes upon each one of us, and the intimate and interesting connexion it establishes between the minister and the people.

In closing this course of instruction, I am desirous that you should clearly understand, that the minister is not called upon to draw any line of spiritual character distinguishing between Communicants. He may not separate any, except in cases where he "has knowledge" of any of them notoriously living in plain and open sin, to the scandal of the other members of the Church. He is not to decide who are *true* members or who are not. As to persons who are not Communicants, they all decide plainly for themselves; they declare, by their line of conduct, that they do not profess to be Christians. I do not say that they are *not* Christians; but *they themselves* say so by refusing to make the required profession though the Church is ready to receive them as members of the body. The minister receives the Communicants, building them upon the foundation, and not daring to make any distinction. He is not responsible for their all being such materials as will stand the trial of fire—the means by which their fitness will be made manifest. We look forward to the time of proving, and beyond it: we look forward to the day of the Lord, when every soul that bears the trial, and endures to the end, will be the jewels in our crowns. This is a wonderful thought, but it is assuredly scriptural. Looking forward with such an anticipation, whilst placing you as the materials on the laid foundation of God's building, we find this caution written, "Let every man take heed *how* he buildeth thereupon." I must take heed "how I build," my beloved brethren. And as I cannot know your hearts, I take heed to make you sift and judge yourselves. The Church of Christ, of which you call yourselves a part, places before you a high, a holy, and a scriptural profession—a profession which none but a true Christian can make *honestly*. No person can come into this Church, and go through our services—truly and devoutly worshipping at the Lord's Table—partaking of the Holy Communion in the mode appointed—and mean and feel what

they say:—no person, my brethren, can do this but a Christian—one who is under the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Here lies the whole power of the application. You come and do this—you have done it again and again—you, the Communicants (for I am speaking now to those 'amongst you alone). I have no power to judge of your motives. If you are sincere and honest in what you do, you will assuredly be saved; and if you are saved you will be my gracious reward—jewels in my crown. If you are not sincere in what you do—if it be a mere lip worship—a service in which your heart is not engaged, and with which your mind does not go along; then I am commanded to say that, alas! such will assuredly perish, if they continue in that state. And however I may have hoped over such, and have cherished them as precious materials, and have looked forward to the day when they would be my joy and crown, I shall be robbed of my expectation, and shall suffer loss.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, I would leave no means untried to carry out the sifting duty which the Church has put into my hands. What is that duty? To make every individual judge himself. To be responsible for no man's profession, but in charity to receive every man's; and to throw the responsibility upon the person who makes it. The Church calls upon each individual to make a statement, in the nature of an oath, every time he communicates—can any oath be more solemn? If what the Communicants say every time they come into this house be true, they are saved—they will be a joyous reward to me as jewels in my crown. If it be not true, they will perish and I shall suffer loss. Now try yourselves, my brethren,—look well into your own hearts. May God give me grace to try, by every means, to help you to do this. It is with this view that I send you regularly the Monthly Church Accounts. If these be carefully attended to, they will enable each of you to see where you stand with re-

spect to the Church in this parish. If you have a reasonable hope that you are a living member, this monthly remembrance comes to assist and comfort you. If you are consistent with your profession, bearing the fiery trial that is to try you, what words are too large—what expression too strong to describe the joy of the minister's heart in looking to you as his jewels? If, on the contrary, you go forth from your profession in Church, and my work is burnt up in the fiery trial, as the wood, the hay, and the stubble, what words can describe the awfulness of your condition—the fearful disappointment that awaits both you and me in the day of the Lord's coming? The command to depart into outer darkness will be issued to you—you will be stripped from my crown, and I suffer loss. I pray God of his great mercy to grant, that the consideration of this subject, now brought to a close, may be so blessed of Him, that it may lead each and all of us, very diligently to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith.

PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE.

PART II.

**ITS DETAIL,
SHEWN IN SOME PARTICULARS OF THE CHURCH
IN A COUNTRY PARISH.**



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

I.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE PARISH.

BEFORE giving the documents referred to in the Introduction, it will be important to state the following Classifications of the Inhabitants of the Parish at the end of the year 1832, after four years gradual application of the principles already set forth.* The subsequent Papers were all circulated after that period.

Statement of the Means of Instruction afforded in the Parish, with the result of four years.

DATE.	Sunday School.		Lads and Young Women's Class.		Adult School.		Infants' School.		National School.		Books sold and given.						Lending Library.	Tracts.					
	Admitted.	Left.	No. in School.	Admitted.	Left.	No. in Class.	Admitted.	Left.	No. in School.	Admitted.	Left.	No. in School.	Bibles.	Testaments.	Prayer Books.	Hymn Books.			Text Books.	Family Prayers.			
1829.	145	34	111	..	..	Men. 17	..	17	97	36	61	35	15	20	S 26 G 50 Total 76	27 51 78	53 .. 53	100 28 128		43 .. 43	1045	..	
1830.	35	50	97	L 22 W 5 Total 27	..	22 5 27	M 8 W 11 19	13 2 15	12 9 21	53	45	69	59	39	47	S 21 G 24 Total 45	7 51 58	22 7 29	59 24 83	55 26 81	.. 22 22	1008	..
1831.	30	38	89	L 6 W .. Total 6	16 ..	12 5 17	M 5 W 1 6	4 4 8	13 6 19	15	13	61	18	15	50	S 17 G 11 Total 28	6 21 27	29 3 32	29 3 32	50 12 62	.. 22 22	598	..
1832.	25	22	92	L 2 W 5 Total 7	10 5 15	4 5 9	M 3 W .. 3	9 3 12	6 3 9	21	32	50	27	37	50	S 21 G 12 Total 33	2 31 33	25 .. 25	26 .. 26	36 15 51	.. 24 24	Lent 4296 Given 439	..
Totals of the whole 4 Years.	236	144	..	L 30 W 10 Total 40	26 5 31	M 33 W 12 Total 45	26 9 35	26 9 35	186	126	106	139	S 85 G 97 Total 182	42 154 196	129 10 139	214 55 269	141 53 194	.. 111 111	3077	4735			

The Averages of actual Attendance upon the Means of Grace and of Education, together with a Comparison of the previous years' Averages.

	CONGREGATIONS (NOT INCLUDING CHILDREN.)										SCHOOLS.				
	Morning.	After-noon.	Evening.	Wednesd. Sacra- Lecture, ment.	Cottage Reading.	Barn Meeting.	Mission. Meetings.	Infants.	National.	Together.	Sun. Morn.	Sun. A.B.	Lads' Class.	Younger men's Class.	Adult Sunday, Weekly.
January	170	138	119	71	12	..	..	34	48	82	73	70	7	0	7
February	171	121	117	70	14	..	..	36	57	93	68	75	5	4	6
March	149	124	124	64	12	..	..	43	59	101	78	79	12	7	6
April	209	145	147	58	9	..	..	40	58	98	95	65	9	7	7
May	196	165	132	65	10	..	..	48	56	104	90	80	10	8	13
June	198	131	88	64	8	..	..	54	48	102	78	88	6	8	10
July	167	131	101	62	5	..	..	41	42	90	70	63	3	4	4
August	139	111	90	30	..	..	..	24	74	96	74	66	..	6	7
September	178	140	115	40	16	..	..	37	..	37	68	63	..	7	..
October	162	125	76	47	10	..	..	34	29	63	68	51	2	8	8
November	160	110	75	73	9	..	..	27	33	60	64	59	2	5	4
December	191	128	82	64	9	..	..	20	65	85	65	51	2	4	11
Yearly average of 1832	174	131	109	66	10	57	48	38	50	68	75	67	6	0	6
Ditto of 1831	161	133	100	62	51	49	60	36	54	90	70	60	6	4	6
Increase	13	..	9	4	15	8	..	2	..	..	5	7	1	1	..
Decrease	..	2	..	..	..	..	12	..	4	2	..	..	..	..	1

B. The Classification applied to the means of Grace.

	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Male.	Female.	Total.
Classes 3, 4, & 5, should attend means of grace, independent of School. They amount to—	194	172	366	49	39	88	13	17	30	256	228	484
Deduct professed Dissenters abstain- ing from any Attendance	2	4	6	2	..	2	..	..	..	4	4	8
Remaining number ought to attend ..	192	168	360	47	39	86	13	17	30	252	224	476
Actually do attend, 3 Classes— ..												
1. Constant Attenders	45	45	90	8	4	12	4	7	11	57	66	113
2. General	40	39	79	7	9	16	..	..	..	47	48	95
3. Occasional	77	56	133	19	18	37	4	4	8	100	78	178
Total Attenders	162	140	302	34	31	65	8	11	19	204	182	386
Do not attend at all	30	28	58	13	8	21	5	6	11	48	42	90
Total as above	192	168	360	47	39	86	13	17	30	252	224	476

Classification applied to Communicants.

Total number of Persons in the Parish of Age to Communicate, being Nos. 4, 5, & 6, of Classification A.	Males.	Females.	TOTAL.
	224	213	437
Deduct professed Dissenters, as in Clas- sification B.....	4	4	8
	220	209	429
Persons who have Communicated in the year 1832.	79	109	188
Persons of proper Age, who did not Com- municate	141	100	241

Account of attendance at the Communion.

	Men.	Women.	TOTAL.
Have Communicated 14 times	2	..	2
..... 13	2	2	4
..... 12	2	..	2
..... 11	1	4	5
..... 10	3	4	7
..... 9	2	4	6
..... 8	6	6	12
..... 7	5	5	10
..... 6	9	13	22
..... 5	9	15	24
..... 4	6	8	14
..... 3	6	14	20
..... 2	13	14	27
..... 1	13	20	33
Total	79	109	188

As many occasions may legitimately occur to prevent members of the same family, and others, from attending the Sacrament *every time* it is administered, the following result is stated:

Total Number of Communicants.....	188
Number of Persons who have communicated each 6 times or more	70
Have been admitted within the second quarter of the year..	32
Ditto ditto third ditto ..	23
Ditto ditto fourth ditto ..	13

These have not had opportunity of coming every time. 68
Have regularly communicated..... 138

Number of Persons who have communicated less than six times
without apparent reason 50

~~~~~  
The average attendance at the Sacrament is 62.

### *Comparative Progress of Four Years.*

|                                                                | 1829. | 1830. | 1831. | 1832. |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of Persons who have communi-<br>cated in the Year ..... | 95    | 100   | 127   | 188   |

## II.

### THE CHURCH.

1. IN the Bible **THE CHURCH** is called **THE BODY OF CHRIST**: and the body of which **CHRIST IS THE HEAD**; which means, the body or number of people who are joined to Christ by the Holy Spirit, and are under His power and obey Him; in the same way that the members or limbs of a man's body move about, and do what, in his head, the man thinks and intends to do. Eph. i. 22, 23. Col. i. 18, 24. John xiv. 16—18, 23; xv. 4; xvii. 20—23. Rom. viii. 1.

2. No one can be for ever with God in heaven hereafter (that is, can be saved from perishing), except those who are thus joined to Christ—the Church, so spoken of in the Bible. John iii. 16—18, 36; Acts iv. 12; xiii. 38; 1 Cor. iii. 11; 1 John v. 12.

3. All persons who are so joined to Christ (and therefore saved) must have this work of the Holy Spirit begun in them *while they are in this life*. If they go out of this life without it, they cannot possibly be joined to Christ (or be saved) after their death. Matt. xviii. 3; John iii. 3, 5; ix. 4; Eccles. ix. 10; 2 Cor. vi. 2; Rev. v. 9, 10.

4. When the work of the Holy Spirit has begun in people, it makes them desire to live accordingly—they leave off bad ways and follow good ways—and they are willing to acknowledge that they look for salvation only by the name and power of Jesus Christ. Rom. viii. 1—14; Gal. v. 22—25. 2 Tim. ii. 19; Tit. ii. 11—14; Gal. vi. 14.

5. God knows exactly in whom the work of the Holy Spirit has begun. Men cannot tell this exactly; they can only see the outward conduct of their neighbours without being able to judge of inward motives. Each person may however have some knowledge of *his own* motives, and so be able to judge as regards himself. Rom. viii. 27; 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Matt. vii. 16, 17; xii. 33; Rom. viii. 16; 1 John iv. 13; v. 10, 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

6. "The Church" is commanded in the Bible to assemble together, pray together, communicate together, and act together in a great many ways. They must therefore be known to each other as an outward body of people. But who is to decide what particular persons are to make up this outward body—the Church? God could tell who, but He has not. Men cannot tell who, because they cannot know their neighbours' hearts. As people know something of their own hearts, they are the only ones who can decide in their own cases. To form the body of Christians, or the Church, in this life therefore, every member must declare for himself that he belongs to it, by professing, or publicly stating, that which a Christian ought to profess. Matt. xviii. 17; Acts xiv. 27; xv. 22. Rom. xiv. 23; Col. iv. 16; 1 Cor. xi. 28, 31; Rom. x. 9—11.

7. If any person *refuses* to do this, he leaves it to be supposed that he does not think he belongs to the Church of Christ;—that is to say, that he is a Christian. He leaves it to be supposed that he has no desire to live according to the power of the Holy Spirit—no desire to leave off bad ways, and follow good ways—that he does not acknowledge that he looks for salvation only by the name and power of Jesus Christ. (See 4).

8. But people may deceive themselves, when they think they have these good desires; and so may profess and join the Church, without being really influenced by the Holy Spirit.



therefore without really belonging to the true Church. Or people may speak falsely, and to gain some present benefit they may deceive others when they profess and join the Church, being in fact only hypocrites.

9. This is very true: but shall such persons be separated from the body? Who shall undertake to choose out all the false members? God, who is the only one who *could* do this, has distinctly declared that He does not mean to do so, until "the end of the world;" and, in the mean time, He has forbidden men to undertake the task. Matt. xiii. 24—30, 36—43, 47—50; xxii. 2—14.

10. From this it is plain that it never can be possible to assemble a perfect body of real spiritual Christians to form the outward Church in this life; and that it was not intended that this should be the case. For some men will always be found weak enough to deceive themselves—and some wicked enough to deceive others. God *will not* separate them in this life, and men *cannot*. Many attempts to obtain such a church has been made, and all have failed of success, while they have produced much evil and sin.

11. But this makes it the more necessary that the declaration to be made by every person joining the Church should be strict and strong, that hypocrisy may be made to appear as great a crime as it really is, and thereby people may be prevented as much as possible from making a false statement: also that sincere people may the more examine themselves before joining the Church, lest they should deceive themselves. All this is done by requiring a strict declaration of faith, and promise of practice; while one less strict would make it so much the easier for people to deceive themselves when they profess; and so much the easier for hypocrites to overcome the struggles of conscience within them in order to profess.

12. All the people who make a declaration that they be-

lieve those things which the Bible shews to be necessary to salvation, and who make a promise to do those things which the Holy Spirit leads God's people to do—all such people, living in one place, form THE CHURCH in that place. The Bible never speaks of two Churches in one place. When "*churches*" are mentioned, the meaning is, bodies of Christians living in different places; and never, different bodies of Christians living in the same place. Acts viii. 1; xiii. 1; Col. iv. 16; Rev. i. 11; ii. 1, 8, 12, 18; iii. 1, 7, 14;—— Acts ix. 31; xv. 41; 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 19; 2 Cor. viii. 1.

13. The Church in each place makes rules and laws suitable for its own members, that all things may be done decently and in order. If these are set forth by proper authority, and are not contrary to the word of God, all the members are bound to obey them. 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40; xi. 16; 1 Tim. i. 3; Tit. i. 5; Matt. xviii. 17; Rom. xvi. 16, 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; 2 Thess. iii. 6.

14. When people profess to believe the Gospel, the manner appointed by Christ for receiving them into the Church is by Baptism. If Baptism seems a matter of small importance, there is so much the less reason for refusing to be baptized. If any person refuse this lesser command of Christ, how can such a one be expected to obey His greater commands. Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 16.

15. When any one (man or woman) has been baptized, the children of such a one have the privilege of being received into the Church by Baptism also. Christ said that infants were "of the kingdom of God;" and He also said that "none can enter into that kingdom except they be born of water and of the Spirit." The Apostles accordingly baptized children into the Church, and this privilege has been ever since given to the children of the members of the Church. Mark x. 14; John iii. 5; Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. i. 16; vii. 14.

16. The rules of the Church of England appoint, that when

infant members are admitted by baptism, the Church should assemble and pray for the gift of the Holy Spirit to the child; and, in confidence that this prayer is offered, and answered (according to God's promise), the child is treated as one born of the Spirit, as well as of water.

17. Sureties are appointed for each child, to see that the parents do their duty, and bring up the infant member in christian knowledge and godly living. The surety is taken until the child comes of age to take a Christian profession upon himself, *and no longer*.

18. At that age the rules of the Church appoint, that an opportunity should be afforded to every member who was baptized as an infant, to *confirm*, for themselves, the profession of faith and promise of practice that was the condition under which the Church received them as members, and baptized them in infancy. Upon their doing so, the membership, with all its privileges and blessings, is *confirmed* to them. This act is called CONFIRMATION.

19. Every person *refusing confirmation* breaks off (as far as he can) from the Church; he shews that he would not have been baptized, if he had known what it was, when he was young; and he leaves it to be supposed that he has no desire to be one of God's people; to be partaker of the Gospel salvation; or to live as the Gospel requires Christians to live.

20. Therefore, a person who acts thus would become a heathen if he could *unbaptize himself*. But as his parents brought him to Christ, and he has been once admitted into the Church; by refusing to *continue* a Christian he commits the great sin of knowingly rejecting the Saviour, and rebelling against him, which a heathen has not the opportunity of doing. Infant-Baptism therefore, if Confirmation be afterwards refused, only exposes a person to be judged as one who refuses offered mercy, and who willingly becomes a rebellious deserter from the service of Christ, his Master.

## III.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

5 April, 1835.

WE are approaching the solemn festival of Easter; and during the next week we shall be considering the circumstances of the Passion, or Sufferings, of our blessed Lord. At such a season all serious and sincere Christians must naturally have their minds turned to the duty and advantage of partaking of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as the appointed means of shewing their sense of those sufferings. It may be well to call your attention to the way in which the Church shews how fitting this is considered to be at such a season. You will find this direction at the end of the Communion Service, in the Prayer Book. "*And note, that every Parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one.*" This does not mean that a parishioner need *only* come to the Communion three times in the year, but it directs that, *at the least* he should do that; and it specially marks the season of Easter, as a most proper time to shew forth the Lord's death, when we have been meditating upon the events that attended his death; humbling ourselves in a particular manner for our sins, which made his death necessary; and when we are called upon to rejoice at his "rising again for our justification." It is very grievous to think how many there are in this parish, who never seem to think of profiting by this season, in remembering the Lord's death, that they may rejoice in his resurrection as they ought to do. May God, in great mercy, call all such to a better mind. As the minister of Christ, in His name I invite you all to consider how ready He is to receive you, that you may turn from your sins, and live the life of the Spirit now; and be saved in the

day of His Coming hereafter. As the Pastor appointed by the Church, I call your attention to its directions; and entreat you to study the two exhortations that are appointed to be read when warning is given of the celebration of the Holy Communion, which you will find in the Prayer Book: and to enable "*every Parishioner*" to obey the rule of the Church, I shall celebrate the Communion both on Good Friday, and on Easter Sunday; so that every family may make arrangements that all its members may attend, either on one day, or on the other.

If you are a Communicant make it a subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily occupation, that you may feel more the importance of continually renewing your remembrance of the Lord's dying for you; and if you are not in the habit of coming to the Lord's Table, make it a subject of earnest prayer that you may be able to put away every thing that has hindered you in times past, and to join yourself diligently to Christ for the future.

#### IV.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

26 April, 1835.

IN the Word from the Pastor of the 5th of April, your attention was drawn to the directions of the Church, "that every parishioner should communicate at the least three times in the year; of which Easter to be one." The subject has been very fully explained to you, both as respects the duty and advantage of partaking of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, according to the command of Christ, in the first place—and also as respects what the Church requires from all her members, and the care which she takes to help



them forward in this duty. You are all well aware that, for the particular purpose of enabling every parishioner to obey these directions, and to take advantage of the Lord's pledge, at this season, the Communion was administered on Good Friday, as well as on Easter Day; so that those members of a family who could not come on the one day, might on the other; and all, therefore, might communicate at this season. Have all communicated? Very far from it. There may be said to be about 400 persons in this parish who are of a *proper age* to attend the Lord's Table. At the Easter just past there were 117 persons who communicated (of which four were then received for the first time). Besides these, ten persons who usually communicate were hindered by illness, or infirmity; and four others were hindered by absence. This takes 131 out of the 400. There are besides thirty-two persons, who, though they have not attended at this season, as the Church directs, yet have partaken of the Lord's Supper at other times in this year. Let us make the best of the account, and add these; which will only encrease the number of communicants to 163. Now this leaves 237 persons in the parish who never obey the dying command of the Lord Jesus at all: no wonder then that they take no account of the Church's directions as to a particular time for doing so. This should be looked upon as a very sad state of things; because, as the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the outward public mark and token by which any one professes himself to be a Christian, those who refuse that Sacrament when it is offered to them, plainly refuse to profess themselves Christians, and are satisfied to continue in an unchristian state. And is it not a sad state of things that more than half the grown-up people in the parish should consent to continue in an unchristian state? It has been sometimes asked me: "Do you think that all the grown-up people in the parish are fit to go to the Lord's Table?" The answer is,



that it does not signify in the least what I think about it, since the Church does not put it into her minister's power to act upon what *he thinks* of a person's fitness or unfitness (except in cases where he "*has knowledge*" of any one being "*an open or notorious evil liver*;" or where "*he perceiveth malice to reign.*") "Having knowledge," and "perceiving," are very different things from "thinking," or forming a private opinion. I am sure that there is not one of you who is fit for Christ's Kingdom of Glory, unless he be fit to shew forth Christ's death till he come: and whether I, or any one else, think that those who do not communicate are *not* yet fit, one thing is plain; that each person who keeps away shews that *he does not think himself fit* yet; and therefore such a one ought not to be offended if I urge him to consider his acknowledged unfitness as a very dreadful state; and beseech him without delay to forsake his sins, and come to Christ, whose "blood cleanseth from all sin." 1 John i. 7.

Make it a subject of your secret prayers while you are engaged in your daily work, that the Spirit of Christ may more powerfully influence the people of this parish, to determine, one and all, to come to Christ in sincerity, and join in the Communion of His body and His blood.

## V.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

8 Nov. 1835.

THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered to-day, instead of last Sunday. It was put off then, because the first Communion after the Confirmation having taken place only a fortnight before, it seemed better to divide the time more equally between that and the December Communion. It has pleased God to put it into the hearts of

increasing numbers of the parishioners to attend the Lord's Supper. There are now 202 persons in the parish who are Communicants. It should be a subject of earnest prayer with each, that they may all be brought to the Table by the guiding of the Holy Spirit; and kept in continual remembrance that the death of Christ for their sins shews the hatefulness of sin; and that Christ died to purify them to himself as a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Each of the Communicants should keep in mind that it is by a *patient continuance* in well-doing that they must shew their value for the gift of eternal life: and none must deceive themselves with the notion that, having put their hands to the plough, they can be fit for the kingdom of God if they look back.

It is of importance that the continuance and frequent communion of the members of the Church should be rendered as convenient as possible, that no hindrance may be made an excuse for neglecting the appointed means of remembering the Lord Jesus, and shewing forth his death. When the usual sermon is preached, and when a number of persons attend the Communion, the length of time which is occupied in the service may, by some, be considered as an impediment. Arrangements will in future be made to prevent this, and to make the Communion Service end about the same time that the usual morning service ends on other days, or very little later. The Service begins on Communion Sundays at a quarter before eleven—and, instead of preaching a sermon in which some point of doctrine or practice is considered at large, as is the case upon other occasions, some passage of Scripture, calculated to lead the mind and heart to a fitting state of preparation for the Holy Sacrament, will be plainly expounded, and rather applied than dwelt upon by way of explanation. This will not occupy more than a quarter of an hour, or twenty minutes, and will be very like what the exposition at the Sacramental Meetings has hitherto

been. If this be attended to in a prayerful spirit, it may, by God's blessing, be more likely to prepare the heart for the solemn Communion than listening to a sermon which requires more thought. Besides this, by a new arrangement of the rails, twenty persons may receive the bread and wine at one time; so that the delay to the whole communicants will be much less, and they may expect to leave the church at a quarter after one, at furthest.

An alteration will also be made in the manner of conducting the Sacramental Meetings. As there will be an exposition of Scripture in future on the Sunday of the Communion, it will not be given on the Friday evenings; and, except upon particular occasions, more of the time will be spent in prayer. A portion of Scripture will be read with very little explanation, and then the people will be informed of the subjects upon which the minister will afterwards lead them to the throne of grace. These subjects will be such as ought to interest those who are preparing to remember the death of Christ, in his appointed Sacrament. As many sincere persons are often prevented from coming to the Lord's Table in consequence of some troubles or difficulties which hurt their consciences through mistaken views which may be easily explained to them, it is very desirable that all such persons should have an opportunity of speaking to the minister upon the subject which disturbs them, before they make up their minds *not* to come to the Communion. To enable them to do this, the minister will always attend at the School-House, at half-past six, that is, half an hour before the Sacramental Meeting; and any person may then come and speak to him privately upon such subjects. With this opportunity always offered to them, no person can be justified in staying away from the Communion, without first taking the proper means of getting rid of his difficulty; and if any one does, the responsibility will rest upon himself.



## VI.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

10 April, 1836.

YOUR attention has been called to the directions of the church "that every parishioner should communicate at the least three times in the year, of which Easter to be one." And, if you will refer to the Word for the first Sunday after Easter, last year, you will find that an account was given you of the manner in which these directions were complied with then. It may be useful to give a similar account this year, as it may perhaps serve, through God's blessing, to awaken attention in some who are living in constant neglect of the Lord's dying command, and refusing the means of grace which he has appointed: and it will, at all events, inform the members of the Church of the state of their numbers; and may lead some to pray earnestly for their careless fellow-parishioners.

At Easter last year, there were only 163 persons in the parish, who were communicants (of which only 117 obeyed the Church, by attending at Easter time.) Before the end of the year these persons were increased to 217; which was the total number of Communicants in the year, out of about 400 who were of proper age to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Of these, seven died, and sixteen have left the parish; so that the number at the beginning of this year was 194. Since this year has begun, five new communicants have been added, of whom one has since died: and thus the whole number of communicants at present in the parish is 198; or about half the number of grown-up people; for ALL of whom Christ died, and to whom He says, "drink ye all of it." Only 112 communicated at Easter; but about twenty-four others were hindered by illness, or other reasonable causes: so

that sixty-two of the Communicants, without any apparent excuse, have neglected the directions of the Church, as to the time for communicating.

It may be as well to make the state of the parish in this respect a little more plain, that no parishioner may be ignorant of it. There are in the parish 143 houses. In forty-four of these, every grown-up person is a Communicant; and in fifty other houses, some members of each family communicate; so that the profession of Christ's religion is made in ninety-four houses. But there remain forty-nine houses in the parish, in which there are no persons who make a reasonable and consistent profession that they belong to Christ, and depend upon His death for their salvation. How grievous is this state of things! May God speedily alter it, by awakening a more earnest care for their souls in all the people.

## VII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

*19 March, 1837.*

ONCE more the season of our great christian Passover has arrived, (1 Cor. v. 7.) and we begin to-day the week of the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church calls upon us to employ that week in an especial consideration of those sufferings, as borne of his own free will for our sins. This can best be done by thinking much of the greatness of our sins, which caused His sufferings, and of the greatness of His love which bore those sufferings. In a country Village like ours, it would be scarcely possible for any number of the people to attend the regular services of the Church, every day in the week; it is therefore better that your minister

should make such arrangements, as will enable the people to profit, during this week, according to the spirit and intention of the Church, rather than by a strict following of the letter of her directions. This was clearly shewn during the Passion Week last year, by the very small number of persons who were able to attend the daily Service appointed by the Church. It has been with a view to this, that your Pastor has carried on the course of instruction, during Lent, by which we have gone through a particular examination of the four first commandments, being the first table of the law of God. Those who properly attended to this course of instruction, cannot fail to have found how much cause there is to humble themselves deeply, and sincerely, at this season. To help you all in fulfilling the intentions of the Church, during Passion Week, the following arrangement is made. For the purpose of bringing to mind a clear understanding of the sufferings of our Lord, those parts of Scripture which contain the History of each day in that eventful week, are pointed out day by day in the Calendar. (An account of this daily History was given in the Calendars of Passion Week in the years 1834 and 1835.) You are advised to read these Scriptures, on each day, as they are placed before you. For the purpose of helping (through divine grace) to bring you to a really humbled sense of your sins, which caused those sufferings, your Pastor will meet his parishioners during the week (see Calendar), and will assist them in applying the Lent course of instruction. On Monday Evening, he will attend at the School-room, and apply the Questions at the end of the Text Papers No. 2 and 3. On Tuesday he will attend at the Rector's Room, and apply the Questions at the end of the Text Paper No. 4. On Wednesday at the Cottage Reading, he will apply those at the end of Text Papers No. 5 and 6. On that evening at the Lecture, he will explain Psalm xxii., which is a prophetic account of the Passion of



Christ. On Thursday there will be a Sacramental Meeting. On Good Friday, the usual public services will take place, and the Communion will be administered.

It is still necessary to call your attention to the arrangement by which the Lord's Supper will be administered twice at this season. The object in view has not yet been attained; and while that is the case, it is the Pastor's duty still to warn, and to urge, whether the people will hear, or whether they will forbear. (Ezek. ii. 7.) The Communion of the Lord's body and blood is the outward mark and token by which a profession is made, that persons desire to avail themselves of the benefits of Christ's death: and, as there is no reasonable excuse for not feeling the desire; nor any, that will hereafter avail, for not coming in faith to Christ; so there can be no excuse which ought to have any weight, to hinder sinners from making an outward profession by Communion. It is well known, that whatever number of members attend the Communion, there are still a great number in the parish who neglect it altogether. It is impossible for a christian to consider this truth seriously, without feeling alarm and compassion concerning those who, "thus wilfully abstain from the Lord's Table, and separate from their brethren, who come to feed on the banquet of that most heavenly food." It should also be remembered, that by this conduct, they break themselves off from the Communion of the Church. The Church considers no person as continuing to be a member, who neglects attendance upon the Lord's Table. That it may be clearly understood what is considered *neglect*, the members are required by her rules, to communicate "*at the least* three times in the year;" and that proper attention may be paid to the solemn instruction conveyed by this season, it is ordered that Easter should be one of these times. There are many baptized persons in this parish who thus *excommunicate themselves* from the Church. Is it not to be feared,

that they must also be negligent of the means of being admitted into the eternal glory, in which only the true members of the body of Christ will find a place. Eph. iv. 15, 16.

It is but too plain that much deadness and coldness concerning spiritual religion, is to be found in this flock: and that even those who have shewn earnestness in the cause and service of Christ seem to have, in some degree, felt the effects of this state of things. (Gal. iv. 18; v. 7—9.) There should be more evident marks of the Holy Spirit amongst us, in spiritual life, and in holy living. To this end, there wants a more pressing and more patient spirit of prayer. Your Pastor calls upon every one who feels the truth of this remark, to be diligent in much supplication to God, that for Christ's sake, He may shew forth the power of the Holy Spirit more largely amongst us. Let them take encouragement from our Lord's parables of the friend who at first refused the loaves; and of the importunate widow. (Luke xi. 5—13; xviii. 1—8.) And let them especially use the more earnest diligence during this Passion Week, that by a united effort, we may obtain the blessing that God is willing to give.

### VIII.

#### THE PASTOR'S ACCOUNT. No. I.

They watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

Heb. xiii. 17.

2 April, 1837.

At the beginning of the year you were told, that it was the purpose of your Pastor to shew you something of the spiritual state of the parish, by making you acquainted with a few simple facts, concerning the numbers of the congregations, and of the attendants on the different means of grace and instruction; comparing the few past years with the present.

There has been hitherto no opportunity of entering upon this "Pastor's Account;" but the season of Easter has now passed; and as it is a special direction of the Church that all the members should communicate at that time, it seems a proper occasion for beginning this account, by letting you see exactly what is the state of the parish as concerns regular Church-membership.

It must always be remembered that the Church does not put it into the power of any person whatever to judge who are, or who are not, the truly spiritual members of Christ, whose names are written in the Book of Life. This is a secret known only with certainty to God himself; and which will only be declared to men at the great day of the Coming of the Lord. Those persons who are really influenced by the Holy Spirit of Christ will certainly give some proof that they are so; both by their course of good living, and by their outwardly professing their christian faith in the appointed way. This state of things necessarily affords an opportunity for the good and the evil to be mixed together, in outward profession at least; because persons who deceive themselves as to their religious state, and those who desire to deceive others, may make the same profession that the really humble and sincere christian does. It has not however pleased God to afford a remedy for this difficulty, during our present state; on the contrary, in the parable of the tares and the wheat, our Lord shewed that the servants of the householder could not properly distinguish between them; and therefore both were to be left in the field until the harvest, when He himself would make the distinction. By this He teaches us, that His ministers are not able rightly to distinguish in all cases, between the spiritual children of God, and the self-deceived or hypocritical professors; and therefore, that they are not to presume to make the distinction themselves, but to leave it to Him, at His coming.

As there are two ways of shewing outwardly the inward work of the Spirit in our hearts ; (one being a course of outward good conduct, and the other a public profession in the appointed way) when one of these is plainly contrary to the other, there can be no doubt that the person is not in a right state ; and therefore it becomes necessary to prevent the scandal of a notoriously evil liver making a spiritual profession of religion. The duty of preventing such a scandal belongs to the Church ; but, except in such a case, the Church places the responsibility as to the truth of the profession upon each of her members for himself ; for a man *may* know something of his own heart, and therefore he is the person who can come nearest to that knowledge of his own state, which God only has with certainty. The Church follows the Apostle, and commands her members to judge themselves, and upon their own judgment to make their own profession. The Church, therefore, does not make the minister accountable for the state of those who come to the Lord's Supper, (which is the continuing badge and token of a christian) provided they be not notoriously in sin, or openly in malice ; but the Church does make the minister answerable for giving to the people full and sufficient information, to enable them to judge themselves—plain and repeated warnings of the danger of a false profession—and Scriptural inducements constantly to repeat a true profession.

Your Pastor has endeavoured, by the help of God, to discharge the duty laid upon him in this matter. He has given frequent explanations of the subject, in all its bearings :—he affords a special assistance to devotion, before every Communion, at a Sacramental Meeting :—he directs the mind to a diligent self-examination in his discourse, whenever that Sacrament is administered. And having done all that in him lies for the discharge of his own conscience in so serious a duty, he desires to give to each an opportunity of ascertaining

how far he has taken advantage of the instruction thus afforded.

The Church requires all her members to communicate *frequently*: and to prevent any mistake upon the point, it is declared, that at the least, each member should communicate three times in the year; and that the season of Easter should be one of those times. This rule will divide the people of this parish into three different classes. 1st—Those persons who obey it exactly—2dly, those persons who do communicate, but not in complete obedience to the directions of the Church—and 3dly, those persons who do not communicate at all.

At the *beginning* of last year there were 194 persons on the list of the Communicants. To this number seventeen persons were added in the course of the year, making together 211.

Of these, however, eight persons died in the course of the year 1836, and eighteen left the parish. Thus twenty-six were taken from the 211, leaving 185 names.

The number of persons who *actually communicated* in the course of the last year was only 160: and this shews, that there are twenty-five persons in the parish, who, having been Communicants in the previous year, entirely neglected the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, during the year 1836.

This, however, only gives the account of the persons who have joined the Communion during the year. Of these, only 104 come under the first head spoken of; for only that number communicated three times and more—while thirty only attended twice in the year—and twenty-five only once. So that the number of persons under the second head is fifty-six.

There are about 400 persons living in the parish who are of proper age to join the Communion of the Church of Christ: and this will leave about 240 persons, who, during the

course of the last year, have neglected the Communion altogether.

The Account then stands thus for the year 1836.

|                                          |   |       |
|------------------------------------------|---|-------|
| Number of the members of the Church who  | } | 104   |
| have been obedient to her rules .....    |   |       |
| Number of persons who have communi-      | } | 56    |
| cated less than three times .....        |   |       |
|                                          |   | <hr/> |
|                                          |   | 160   |
| Number of persons who have neglected the | } | 240   |
| Communion of the Church altogether,      |   |       |
| about .....                              | } |       |
|                                          |   |       |
| Total number of grown-up people in the   | } | 400   |
| parish, about .....                      |   |       |
|                                          |   | <hr/> |
|                                          |   | <hr/> |

It may be as well to shew the exact state of church-membership at the present season of Easter.

The number of persons who have communicated is 101. It must, however, in fairness be added, that besides this, twelve other members have been prevented from illness—two by distinct duty—and six happened to be from home. This makes the total number who have complied with the church's directions, by Communion at the season of Easter, to be 121: and as there are at present 164 names on the list, there are forty-three persons who have neglected them. The number of Communicants at Easter 1836, with the same allowance for lawful hindrance, was 156.

This account only refers to the year 1836, and to the present Easter, and it shews that about 240 persons in the parish are negligent of the outward token of the profession of the Christian religion. The accounts of the seven years before that bring forward another class, into which this number must be divided. It appears that during those years, no less a



number than 103 persons have begun to make a public profession, and joined themselves to the table of the Lord for a season (some shorter and some longer), but have turned back from the good way on which they had entered. Of these, forty-one have left the parish, after leaving the Communion; but there remains at present in the parish no less than sixty-two in this deplorable condition. (Luke ix. 62. Rev. ii. 4). This number, taken from the 240, leaves 178 persons in the parish who have never communicated at all for the last eight years. A more particular statement of these numbers, year by year, will be given next time the Pastor's Account is sent round.

Plain facts and figures need no arguments: therefore your Pastor would at present add nothing to the facts and figures of this account; except an earnest and affectionate exhortation to every one of the flock to settle in his own mind in which of these classes his own name stands—and to consider well where it ought to stand. If any one has any difficulty in making this personal application, he is invited privately to apply to his Pastor, and he shall have full information, as well as affectionate advice upon the subject.

## IX.

### THE PASTOR'S ACCOUNT. No. II.

They watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

Heb. xiii. 17.

9 April, 1837.

Those amongst you who have really considered the 1st No. of the "Pastor's Account," ought to feel desirous for that more particular statement of the *yearly* account of church-membership, which was promised; because it may help each one the better to trace back his own circumstances in this

respect. It is with this object, that some yearly particulars of the Communion Account of the parish shall be given you. But your Pastor earnestly entreats you to remember, that in considering the account, the only particular case you are to look for is your own; and that the general result should lead the regular members to much prayer for the Spirit of God, that "such as shall be saved may be added to the Church daily." (Acts ii. 47.)

You have already had some particulars of the yearly account for 1836. We will now trace the progress of things, year by year, for the seven previous years.

1829. In this year there were exactly 100 persons who joined the Communion of the Lord's Supper. Of these, six however left the parish; and one died in the course of the year—so that ninety-three remained upon the list at the beginning of the next year. Of that 100, twenty-four persons are not now living in the parish—thirteen have died—fifty-one are at this time Communicants—and twelve have turned away from the table of the Lord.

1830. To the ninety-three upon the list, at the beginning, thirty-four were added in the course of this year: this made 127 Communicants in all. But, on the other hand, that number was sadly reduced. One died; four left the parish; and no less than nineteen went back, and neglected the Communion of the people of Christ. This made the number 103 at the beginning of the next year. Of the thirty-four persons who joined the Communion this year, twelve are not now in the parish—four have died—fourteen are at this time Communicants—and four have altogether neglected the public profession in this Sacrament.

1831. To the 103 Communicants with whom we began this year, thirty-two new ones were added in the course of it—making in all, 135. But the number was reduced by five who left the parish; while there were also nine who discontinued

their attendance. This left 121, but it was made 122 by the return of one of those persons who had neglected to Communicate the previous year. Of the thirty-two who joined the Communion this year, seven are not now in the parish—five are dead—twelve are at present Communicants—and eight have left the table.

1832. This was one of the years in which a Confirmation took place in the parish: and that apostolical rite was, under God's blessing, the means of calling the serious attention of many persons, besides those who were confirmed, to the subject of the Communion. Sixty-three persons became Communicants in the course of this year, who, with the 122 already on the list, made the number 185. But this number was reduced by five who died—nine who left the parish—and ten who deserted the table. This would make the number 161; but six persons returned to the table, and made 167 who were Communicants at the beginning of the next year. Of the sixty-three new Communicants in this year, thirteen are not now in the parish—seven are dead—twenty-eight are at this time Communicants, and fifteen have turned away from the table of the Lord.

1833. To the 167 Communicants, twenty-three were added in the course of this year, making 190. Of these, four died and fifteen left the parish within the year: but there was, besides, a sad falling away—no less than twenty-four neglected the Communion during the year. This reduced the number to 147; but five persons returned, who had before left the Communion; so that the whole number at the end of the year was 152. Of the twenty-three new Communicants, eleven are not now in the parish; six are at this time in Communion; and six have gone back from their profession of Christ in this Sacrament.

1834. To the 152 there were eighteen persons added this year—making 170 Communicants. Of these, two died in the

course of the year, and thirteen left the parish ; while three neglected to communicate ; reducing the number to 152. Of those who were formerly negligent, two returned ; so that the whole number was 154. Of the eighteen new Communicants this year, five are not now in the parish—nine are at this time in Communion—and four have left the table of the Lord.

1835. This was another year in which Confirmation was administered in the parish, and the same result was produced as before. Not only newly-confirmed persons, but many others, were added to the Church. To the list of 154, as it stood in the beginning of the year, fifty-seven new Communicants were added ; making 211 persons in all. Of these, eight died, and thirteen left the parish—five deserted the standard of the cross ; so that these reduced the number to 185. There was an addition of nine, who returned after previous neglect, which made the whole number 194. Of the fifty-seven new Communicants, fourteen are not now in the parish—thirty are at this time in Communion—and thirteen have turned back.

The statement for 1836 has been already given you ; but it may be as well to lay before you the general result of the last eight years. From 1st January, 1829, to the 31st of December, 1836, exactly 339 different persons in the parish have joined the Communion. Of these, eighty-five have removed from the parish, and thirty-two have died, which reduces the number to 222. But the list of persons in Communion in the year 1836 only contains 160, and therefore there are sixty-two persons now in the parish, who, having publicly entered upon a Christian course of profession, have withdrawn from it and turned away from the Lord's Table.—“ Judge yourselves brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord.”

This statement only shews the number of the persons who have communicated. The difference between regular and irregular attendance, shall be pointed out at another opportunity.

## X.

## THE PASTOR'S ACCOUNT. No. III.

They watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

Heb. xiii. 17.

7 January, 1838.

THE two last Numbers which have been given to you, have brought the account of the Communicants in the Parish to the end of the year 1836. Another year has passed; and it is time to carry on the account. The principal object of your Pastor in so doing is to call attention to the solemn account which must one day be given, at the judgment-seat of Christ, by each of you, for the opportunities and means of grace which are afforded you; and for the advantages of membership and Communion in the Church of Christ; and thereby to help every one in judging himself beforehand.

The following statement contains all the information that is necessary, with respect to the Communion of the Church, during the year 1837. Let all who read it remember, that every person in the parish must belong to one or the other of these four classes.

1. Either they may be persons who do not communicate at all, and never have communicated; and who thereby plainly, though silently declare, that there is something or other in them, which hinders them from *considering themselves* the disciples of Christ.

2. Or, they may be persons, who, having once joined the Communion of the Lord's Supper, have drawn back from it; and thus practically deny the profession of Christianity which they once made.

3. Or, they may be persons who have joined the Communion, and who continue to make this profession of their

faith ; but who do it only very seldom, and not so often as the rules of the Church require ; thereby shewing coldness and inattention to the benefits of that Holy Sacrament, and neglect of Church-membership.

4. Or, they may be obedient members of the Church, taking advantage of the appointed means of grace in renewing their public profession of faith ; and coming to receive the spiritual benefits of that Holy Sacrament, at least three times in a year.

These are not fancied divisions, according to any particular opinions held by any one person : but they are classes clearly resulting from the appointed rules of the Church, which are the law of the land. (See Pastor's Account, No. I.) Let every person in this parish consider in which of these four classes his own name stands ; and, wherever each may now stand, may God give you all grace to be brought into the right class, where each would like to be found in the day when you will be called into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### STATEMENT.

|                                                   |     |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----|
| The number of Communicants at the end of 1836 was | 160 |
| Of these did not communicate in 1837.....         | 16  |

---

Leaving 144

|                                                       |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----|
| The number of persons added in the course of 1837 was | 19 |
|-------------------------------------------------------|----|

---

|                                                 |     |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Making the whole number of Communicants in 1837 | 163 |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----|

|                                                  |    |
|--------------------------------------------------|----|
| Two died in 1837, and eight left the parish..... | 10 |
|--------------------------------------------------|----|

---

|                                             |     |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| Leaving the number at the end of 1837 ..... | 153 |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|

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107 of these communicated three times or more, according to the directions of the Church.



56 communicated less than three times; of which  
30 attended twice, and 26 only once.

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163

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The number of Attendants at each Communion, taking  
one with another throughout the year, was fifty-nine.  
Taking the whole number of persons living at this time  
in the parish, who are of proper age to attend the  
Communion, to be still about 400

It appears that amongst them, at this time, the Com-  
municants, regular and irregular, are only 153

---

This leaves the number of persons who reject Church-  
membership altogether so great as 247

Of these, a number have not made any profession of  
Church-membership at all (at least during the last  
nine years)—This number is ..... 186

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But some of these stand in the situation of having  
begun to make a public profession (during the last  
nine years), and have joined the Communion; but  
have drawn back and turned away from it. The  
number of such is no less than ..... 61

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## XI.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

“The present truth.” 2 Peter i. 12.

14 Oct. 1838.

THE Confirmation has passed: it has been a time of  
serious responsibility to all parties—to the persons who  
have been confirmed—to those who have neglected the  
opportunity—to the minister—and to all the parish. Forty  
one persons were confirmed, the greatest part of whom

joined the Holy Communion last Sunday; and others, who were prevented on that occasion, have stated their intention of doing so immediately. There has been much to hope about, and much to be thankful for, in the whole matter; and may God mercifully grant that, by His blessing, much good fruit may be seen to result.

One consequence of no small importance has been the effect as regards the discipline and order of the Church. There have been three confirmations during the ministry of your Pastor; and a comparison of these several occasions, one with another, leads to the satisfactory conclusion, that it is evident that real Scriptural *knowledge* has increased amongst the people: and also that there is a general understanding of the *principle of Church-membership*. It is much to be desired and prayed for, that, these two points being gained, they may, through God's grace, produce the blessed result of more holiness, and Christian love, and godly living among us. This is the solid fruit to which all knowledge should lead, and all means of grace should tend. To help on this end, we ought to take advantage of the steps we have gained; and amongst other things the principle of Church-membership, which is now so well understood, should be more distinctly and plainly acted upon;—not for the purpose of making uncharitable judgments;—but, on the contrary, for the charitable purpose of leading those who neglect the Christian advantages which are within their power, to consider their real situation according to the rules of Christ's Church in this world, that they may be also led on further to consider, what may be their true state according to that which will be required by Christ himself in the world to come. To help on this, it will be as well to call attention, a little more particularly than has hitherto been done, to the actual state of Church-membership in the parish, by a MONTHLY CHURCH-COMMUNION ACCOUNT, the first of which is given with the Calendar to-day; and it is intended to

give such an account after every Communion. Let it be remembered, that no grown up person in the parish acknowledges that he wishes to be considered as a member of the Church, who is not amongst the numbers stated in this account (see Pastor's Account No. IV). It will not only serve to shew the state of the Church ; but also may put the members in mind if any of them should fall into neglect in this matter. In the account, allowance will be made for every possible hindrance with which the Minister is acquainted : "the number of remaining members who do not communicate" will then be stated—not to judge their motives for being absent when their brethren "come to feed on the banquet of that most heavenly food"—but to lead them to enquire and to "judge themselves, that they be not judged of the Lord" in that matter.

Your Pastor desires to take this opportunity of repeating his request that such persons "as intend to be partakers of the holy Communion" *for the first time* will attend to the law which requires that they "shall signify their names to the Curate at least some time the day before." He does not wish to state this so positively as to prevent any person from attending the Sacrament merely because there has been no opportunity of speaking to the minister : but as there are always many opportunities of meeting your Pastor, he hopes that this rule of the Church will not be neglected in the cases of those persons who, having put off communicating after their confirmation, may be afterwards desirous of claiming, *for the first time*, the privilege of Communion with the Church.

## XII.

## THE PASTOR'S ACCOUNT.

6 Jan. 1839.

It was stated to you, in the first part of the advent address to the flock, that your Pastor had determined to continue, for the present year at least, the weekly papers which he has been in the habit of distributing in the parish; and for the purpose of giving you every opportunity of profiting by them, he stated also his intention of endeavouring to encrease their usefulness. There is no way in which they are likely to be more useful, than by exciting each and all of you to self-examination. For some years past, very particular accounts have been kept of the state and progress of that portion of the church which is committed to his charge; and he has found these so useful to himself, that he cannot but hope that a knowledge of their results, may be also very useful to his flock.

It should be always remembered, that the Church is the united body of persons who profess the true faith of Christ. All such persons living in a parish from *the church* in the parish. Every member of the body ought to be interested in the concerns of the whole; and if they are really interested, they will be glad to know exactly its true state. The real standing and progress of the Church in the parish, will always depend upon the true piety and faithfulness of its members, and it must be felt and measured by their conduct and demeanour. Besides this, however, there is much to be done in the orderly arrangement of the general body of the Church in a parish; and in these days, when many care not that all things should be done decently and in order, and when so many love to walk in their own ways, the true members of the Church will be the more interested in knowing what may

be known of its real state in respect of outward things; while such knowledge may also, by God's blessing, be made the means of calling many from habits of thoughtless irregularity, to strive to adorn their profession by greater attention to order.

It is with heartfelt thanksgiving that your Pastor is able to state, that he has had much satisfaction in coming to the result of the Communion Account for 1838. This satisfaction arises from several points of improvement which the account shews: although it is mixed with much grief, at finding there are still so many persons in the parish who refuse to take up the privilege of church-membership, and join themselves to the Lord in His appointed manner.

At the beginning of the year 1838, there were 156 names upon the list of members in communion with the Church: to this number fifty-one have been added during the course of the year; making the whole number of members who have communicated in 1838, amount to 207.

Of these fifty-one, the number who have been admitted for the first time is 45; and the other six have been persons who have returned to the table of the Lord, after having neglected that holy Sacrament, and declined.

The number of 207 is however reduced by deaths, and by communicants leaving the parish;—six have died, and twenty have gone away. This would leave the number to be 181.

But there is yet another reduction. No less than seven persons who communicated in the year 1837 have entirely neglected communion in the year 1838. These therefore must be considered as having *declined* communion with the Church, and their names will not be transferred into the list of members for the present year.

With these deductions, the number of communicating

members of the Church on the list at the beginning of the year 1839, is 174.

It will be very useful to know how these members of the Church are distributed in the parish. There are in all 149 different families, great and small, living in different houses or tenements. Sixty-four heads of families are communicants; and in the case of forty-seven of them, *every member* of the family of proper age also communicates. In seventeen other families the wives are communicants; and in nine other families, where neither of the heads join the communion, there are some other inferior members of the family who are communicants.

To make this statement really useful, we must see what this leaves on the other side of the account. There are fifty-nine whole families in the parish who refuse Communion with the Church. In nine more there are living witnesses that every other member of the family might partake of the benefit if they chose; and in seventeen more, such witnesses are found in the wife and mother. (See 1 Cor. vii. 14.)

The next point that it will be important to consider is the frequency of the attendance of the members in Communion; and in this respect, the account is much more satisfactory than that of former years. May God grant that the improvement may be always increasing.

There were thirteen Communions in the year 1838, and three more at the festivals, to enable all the members of a family to communicate at those seasons; in all sixteen Communions.

|                         |    |       |                        |    |      |
|-------------------------|----|-------|------------------------|----|------|
| 3 communicated 16 times |    |       | 4 communicated 9 times |    |      |
| 3                       | .. | 15 .. | 7                      | .. | 8 .. |
| 3                       | .. | 14 .. | 9                      | .. | 7 .. |
| 2                       | .. | 13 .. | 13                     | .. | 6 .. |



|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| 4 communicated 12 times | 17 communicated 5 times |
| 5 .. 11 ..              | 17 .. 4 ..              |
| 5 .. 10 ..              | 30 .. 3 ..              |
| <hr/> 25                | <hr/> 96                |
| 96                      | <hr/>                   |

121

30 persons communicated twice.

23 — — once.

174

From this it would appear that 121 persons were exact in complying with the rules of the Church, which require that "every parishioner shall communicate at the least three times in the year;" and that fifty-three persons have fallen short of that rule. This however is not quite the case: of these last, no less than twenty-six persons were admitted to the Communion at so late a period of the year, as hardly (if at all) to afford them the opportunity of communicating three times; so that this number ought in fairness to be taken from the last number, and added to the first. The truth therefore is, that 147 members have complied with the rules of the Church, and twenty-seven have been deficient; seventeen of these having communicated twice, and ten only once.

The average number of persons upon each of the seasons of Communion, was seventy-two; and at the three great festivals, the numbers were 109 at Easter; 93 at Whitsuntide; and 125 at Christmas.

There are many subjects for serious consideration which arise out of the particulars of this account. Your Pastor recommends every one of you to think the whole account well over, and make it a matter for self-examination. He will afterwards endeavour, at another time, to assist this

work of self-examination, by giving some statements on the opposite side of the Account.

### CHURCH COMMUNION ACCOUNT.

|                                                    |                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Number of grown-up members in Communion last month | 175                     |
| Added at Christmas                                 | 7                       |
|                                                    | <hr/> 182               |
| Left the Parish                                    | 1                       |
|                                                    | <hr/> Present Total 181 |

81 were present on Christmas day ;

59 were present the Sunday after.

---

140 Together

15 attended both times

---

125 different persons were present.

|   |                              |   |        |     |
|---|------------------------------|---|--------|-----|
| { | 2 were prevented by sickness | } | making | 132 |
| { | 3 ... .. by absence          |   |        |     |
| { | 2 ... .. by necessary duties |   |        |     |

---

Number of remaining members who did not communicate at Christmas ... .. 49

---

12 strangers were present.

---

137 Total number at the Table at Christmas, 1838.

The money collected at the offertory on both days, amounted to two pounds five shillings and ten pence half-penny; the whole of which is given by the Minister and Churchwardens to the ' Friendly Help Society.'

## XIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

31 *May*, 1840.

No special occasion has occurred, since the beginning of the year, for addressing a word from the Pastor to his flock; but he cannot allow the season of Whitsuntide to arrive again, without a word of warning to those who are really sincere in their profession of religion. Many persons go on quietly enough; and, as it seems, satisfactorily for a long while, during a time when no particular temptation lies in their way to lead them astray; but some occasion returns, and they give to themselves, and to others, abundant proof how false was the hopefulness of the quiet and uninterrupted time. The season of Whitsuntide is usually made one of worldliness and excess; and not unfrequently the sinfulness of a great many is made the excuse for the inconsistencies of the few whose profession of religion makes them ashamed of their falls. Year after year a word of warning has been given you, and you are now referred to those "words." May God give you all a blessing in reading them again.

There is one subject, however, which lies very heavily upon the heart of your Pastor, and which this present season seems to be a fitting occasion to put before you. The members in communion with the Church are but 158 out of the 400 grown-up people in the parish. This is sad enough when we think of the 242 persons that remain; and especially when we consider that fifty-eight of them have drawn back from communion with the Church, after having, at one time, joined the Lord's table. But the heaviest burthen on the Pastor's heart, concerning this part of his charge, arises from the luke-

warmness which many of these 158 Communicants manifest regarding their Christian privileges. A lively sense of the importance of that help, which the Lord Jesus Christ is pleased to give to those who remember Him in His appointed way, should induce the members of the Church to be much more constant in their attendance at the Lord's table; so that if they were under the influence of lively spiritual feelings, scarcely any would be absent upon *each communion*; and all would look forward to the communion day as the season of a blessing not to be neglected. But what is the real state of the case?—There have been six opportunities of communion this year; and out of the 158 members of the Church, the average number of attendants has only been sixty-eight at each communion. Upon an average, nineteen persons have been prevented upon each occasion by sickness, by absence, or by necessary duties: when these are added it makes only eighty-seven at each communion; which even then, leaves an average of seventy-one communicants who have each time kept themselves away from the privilege and blessing of shewing forth the Lord's death in that holy Sacrament, which He has ordained and commanded to all the members of His Church—a Sacrament “generally necessary to salvation.” What a fearful symptom this is of coldness and deadness in the general body of the professing Church in this parish! Whence does it arise? and how can it be remedied? It is not difficult to answer these questions: but the object to be attained is, that each member of the Church should ask himself the question, how far he is concerned in producing this symptom?—how many communions he has attended? how many neglected? why he has neglected any? and what the neglect shews in his own particular case? If these questions were honestly put by every one to his own heart, and persevered in with diligent self-examination, the evil would, under the blessing of God, be speedily remedied;

and more signs of spiritual life would be soon perceived amongst us. Especially this result might be hoped for, if those who really are earnest and constant in seeking Christ's help in the appointed way were to make it more distinctly and frequently a subject of prayer, that the Holy Spirit would speedily raise up His great power, and come among us, and with great might succour us with more of the energy of spiritual life.

In order to shew you, both the interest which some of God's people are kindly taking in this flock, and also the effect produced upon other minds by the Church Communion Account of this parish, your Pastor gives you an extract from a letter lately received from a dear brother minister of Christ, who has himself been much experienced in pastoral work, and has been much blessed of God in it. This clergyman is affectionately interested for your Pastor and his people; and he occasionally receives the calendars and weekly papers which are provided for this flock. He writes—

“I should be glad to hear that your communicants were more steady and hungering in their attendance upon the ordinance. It is not their number, but their regularity of attendance in a spiritual appetite for food, and love for their Saviour, that is the standard to take of the character of religion in your parish. I observed the communion on Nov. 4th, 1838 (the last of which I have any record), after deducting those whose absence is *satisfactorily accounted for*, leaves 93 out of 172 without any reason at all. Whether 1839 gives a better report I know not; but the average number of the Sunday congregations as to *double attendance*, and more especially the weekly lecture, after all allowance for agricultural difficulties, give no indication upon a *large scale*, corresponding to the number of communicants, of that hungering appetite for the word and house of God, which ought to characterize a genuine and full profession of the gospel.”



## XIV.

## MONTHLY CHURCH ACCOUNT.

MAY, 1840.

## I. COMMUNION ACCOUNT.

|                                                    |           |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Number of grown-up members in communion last month | 158       |
| Added at last Communion . . . . .                  | 2         |
|                                                    | <hr/> 160 |
| Died since last Communion . . . . .                | 1         |
| Left the parish . . . . .                          | 1         |
|                                                    | <hr/>     |
| Present total                                      | 158       |

58 were present on Whit-Sunday.

40 were present on Trinity Sunday.

---

98 together. 9 attended both times.

---

89 different persons were present.

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| { 10 were prevented by sickness   | } making 106 |
| { 5 . . . . . by absence          |              |
| { 2 . . . . . by necessary duties |              |

Number of remaining members who did not  
communicate at this season . . . . . 52

---

4 strangers were present. 

---

---

93 total number at the table at Whitsuntide, 1840.

The money collected at the offertory amounted to one pound ten shillings: the whole of which is given by the Minister and Churchwardens to the 'Friendly Help Society.'

## II. BAPTISM ACCOUNT.

1. The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to three male children.
2. At these baptisms two members of the Church became



sponsors for the first time; making seventy-eight present members who are sponsors in the parish.

### III. CONGREGATIONAL ACCOUNT.

The average numbers of the adult congregations have been

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. At Sunday morning service         | 167 |
| 2. " afternoon instruction           | 66  |
| 3. " evening service                 | 95  |
| 4. At the week-day lecture in church | 26  |
| 5. At the cottage reading            | 20  |
| 6. At the Monday evening meeting     | 17  |

### IV. EDUCATION ACCOUNT.

#### 1. Sunday School.

| Attendance              | 1st<br>Sunday. | 2nd<br>Sunday. | 3rd<br>Sunday. | 4th<br>Sunday. | 5th<br>Sunday. |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Present                 | 106            | 103            | 100            | 109            | 97             |
| Absent sick             | 2              | 2              | 4              | 2              | 4              |
| " with leave            | 2              | 5              | 5              | 1              | 8              |
| without leave           | 1              | 1              | 4              | 1              | 4              |
| Total                   | 111            | 111            | 113            | 113            | 113            |
| Could not say<br>lesson | 5              | 4              | 5              | 4              | 6              |
| Late                    | —              | —              | —              | —              | —              |
| Bad conduct             | —              | —              | —              | —              | —              |

#### 2. Daily schools.

|         | National school. | Infants' school. | Together. |
|---------|------------------|------------------|-----------|
| Present | 51               | 45               | 96        |
| Absent  | 4                | 5                | 9         |
| Total   | 55               | 50               | 105       |

### V. REGISTER ACCOUNT.

1. One MARRIAGE has been solemnized.

2. One infant, and one member in communion with the Church, have been taken away by DEATH.

### VI. CHARITY ACCOUNT.

1. Friendly Help Society.

The visitors expended £3 2s. 6d. for the benefit of thirty-six families.

2. Widows' Church Alms Box.

The box contained one shilling and sixpence, which is distributed amongst three poor widows.

3. Missionary Funds.

|                     | For Jews' Society. | For Church<br>Missionary Society. |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| In church box.....  | 7d.                | 7d.                               |
| By collectors ..... | 3s. 6d.            | 11s. 2d.                          |
|                     | <hr/>              | <hr/>                             |
| Together            | 4s. 1d.            | 11s. 9d.                          |

### VII. NOTICES.

1. Ordinations are appointed to take place—

On the 28th of June by the Bishop of Hereford.

On the 12th of July by the Bishop of Winchester.

The Cottager's Guide to the New Testament No. LXIII. will be sent round the parish on Sunday the 5th of July.

### XV.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

5 July, 1840.

It is meant to send you next week the second of the Monthly Church Accounts; and to continue (if God will) similar accounts on the second Sunday in every month. Upon the occasion of sending the first of these accounts, your Pastor stated that he intended to point out the advantage which each of you may gain by regularly and carefully examining them

when they are sent to you ; this he purposes now to do briefly ; inviting at the same time every one of the flock to make such enquiries of him personally as they may desire ; upon which he will give to each more full information.

The object of sending this account to the people is three-fold. First, it is for the purpose of leading each person to consider in what position he stands in the Church ; that so you may all the more readily understand your own state as regards spiritual matters. Secondly, it is given in order to make those amongst us, who really know the power and blessing of prayer, more particular and more earnest in supplication for the gift of the Spirit of Christ in the parish. This is likely to be produced by shewing the true state of the case as regards what is done, in order that they may the more plainly perceive what yet remains to be done, and mourn over it, while they make it a matter of prayer. And thirdly, such an account regularly brought before the people is calculated, under God's blessing, to strengthen and keep in mind the real order of the Church ; and to preserve us from the careless and ignorant notions which frequently prevent the benefit which the Church intends for her members.

This being the general principle upon which the account is sent round the parish, it may be advantageous to give a few short hints as to the manner of applying this principle in making use of these accounts.

I. First, as to the *Communion Account*. As this gives the real state of the Church, as far as the rules of her discipline enable us to ascertain it, much care is taken in keeping the account, of which some of the results only are given. The name of every member of the Church is kept in a book, and their days of attendance upon Communion are always marked, as also such reasons for non-attendance as may be known to your Pastor. This book tells also the Sacramental days

when they were present at morning prayers, but did not remain for the Communion, as well as those days when they were absent altogether. Another list is kept of the names of those who, having been members of the Church, have declined, with the length of their backsliding, and the date of their return. Every Communicant is at liberty to know all the particulars in this book which stand opposite to *their own names*; but not those of any other name. Your Pastor thinks it his duty to add, that he inserts these particulars very minutely, as he is in duty bound; as this is the only means of outward discipline which the law of the Church and of the land warrant him in exercising. When therefore a member of the Church examines this monthly account, he ought to consider under what item his own name swells the number; and then to reflect whether the great Head of the Church (who looks more minutely than His appointed servant into the particulars of each case) is satisfied with the place where that name stands. After this self-examination, each line of the account will give abundant occasion for prayer, when the general result is considered; without entering upon any examination of the particulars concerning other names than your own.

II. *The Baptism Account.* As the presence and faithful participation of the members of the Church at the Sacrament of Baptism is of great importance, this part of the account will afford every Communicant an opportunity of examining himself whether he attended upon the occasions mentioned. It will convey also a hint to Sponsors, to put them in mind of their duty; and, by shewing them the number of Sponsors in the parish, will encourage each in fulfilling the office on behalf of the Church which they have undertaken. If the remembrance of these things be accompanied with prayer, this will not be found the least interesting portion of the account.

III. *Congregational Account.* This head of account is a very important one; and, if properly attended to, may perhaps shew the real state of religion in the parish, upon the whole, as truly as any part. Every assembling of persons for worship or instruction is counted, and the number noted in a book. The children are not reckoned in this account, because they are correctly given in the school accounts; and the attendance at the Sunday School being added to the congregational account, will give the whole number of souls present. The total number of souls in the parish may be stated at 750; and the number of persons above the age of education, who ought to attend the means of grace, at about 400. To make this account clear it is right also to state, that while two services are appointed for every Sunday, your Pastor finding himself blessed with a stronger constitution, and better health than are given to many men of his age, is able to add a third means of instruction on the Lord's day. The object of this is twofold; first, to supply assistance to such persons as are able and willing to employ the whole Sabbath in laying in a store of spiritual instruction for the week; and secondly, to offer to *all* persons in the parish the means of attending twice on the Lord's day, in spite of the hindrances which domestic arrangements may cause. By examining this account with a little trouble it may be seen how many people have entirely neglected public worship on the Lord's day, and also how many have attended it but imperfectly. There are about fifty persons who are in the habit of attending all the three services; but as there are occasionally hindrances to these, it is found that the average number of persons actually present three times every Sunday, is about forty. This number having been satisfactorily accounted for, let it be taken from the numbers given in the account at all the three services. This, in the account for May, would leave 127 in the morning, 26 in the after-

noon, and 55 in the evening. If we add the two smaller numbers together they will make 81; which is the largest number of persons that could have attended twice; and this taken from 127 will leave forty-six who only attended once in the day. But if instead of this we suppose that all those who attended in the afternoon and in the evening were different persons from those who attended in the morning, then eighty-one is to be added to 127, and will make it 208 persons; but none of them could have attended more than once; this, together with the forty, encreases the number of attendants to 248 out of the 400 on any one Sunday. What became of the 122 persons who made the difference between the two numbers? If the examination of this account lead any one of them to think where they ought to have been, and no longer to "forsake the assembling themselves together as the manner of some is," it will not have been in vain that care has been taken to make this state of things plain to the people. The other items of the Congregational Account will each suggest useful hints for self-examination to persons who, for trifling reasons, neglect to avail themselves of the instruction which is offered to them.

The other Heads of Account will be made the subject of some future "Word" to you. For the present your Pastor commends these remarks to the serious and prayerful consideration of you all.



## CONFIRMATION.

### XVI.

#### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

16 August, 1835.

THE Bishop, to whom in the providence of God has been committed the oversight of the Church in this part of the country, is about to go round the diocese, to confirm all persons who have been baptized into the Church, and, being sufficiently instructed in what is required of them when they themselves confirm their baptismal vow, are desirous of partaking in the rite of Confirmation. The letter in which he communicates this to the clergy is printed below; and it will be your minister's duty to be "earnest and diligent," in acting according to the instructions it contains.

The subject of Confirmation will be more particularly explained next week; in the mean time every person in the parish who has not yet been confirmed, is requested to attend, either at the Rector's room on Tuesday next, the 18th of August, at seven o'clock in the evening, or on Wednesday next at the vestry room, in the church, at six o'clock in the evening. This arrangement is made for the accommodation of persons who live at Sutton and at Wonston, to spare them time at this season of the year, when there is so much occupation in the fields. These persons are requested to attend upon this occasion, merely to give their names, and to receive instructions as to what is afterwards to be done; so that if

any difficulty should exist in the minds of any one upon the subject, such a one had nevertheless better come at the time specified, and consider his difficulty more maturely afterwards.

### THE BISHOP'S LETTER.

Farnham Castle, August, 1st, 1835.

REVEREND SIR,

INTENDING, by Divine permission, to hold a Confirmation for your parish in the ensuing autumn, I request that you will not fail, on three successive Sundays, at least, after the receipt of this letter, to give notice thereof in your church or chapel, and of your readiness to examine and prepare such of your parishioners as are of proper age, and desirous of participating in this holy rite.

I confidently trust that you will be earnest and diligent in endeavouring to acquaint the candidates with the nature and design of Confirmation; that, before this solemn ratification of their baptismal vow, they may examine themselves seriously, as in the presence of God, whether, by the aid of his heavenly grace, they are heartily desirous of forsaking all sin, and of living henceforward as faithful members of Christ's Church; resting their hopes of eternal happiness solely on the merits of his death, and adorning their profession by a consistent and godly course of life.

To this end you will represent to them, as well by suitable sermons, as by private instruction, the motives by which they should be influenced; the especial duties to which they will be bound; and the benefits which they may expect to derive from a spiritual participation in this sacred ordinance. You will aim at impressing their hearts, under God's blessing, with those devotional and holy feelings which this solemn ceremony is so well calculated to excite; and at encouraging them in those purposes of faith, love, and obedience in the service of

their Redeemer, to which the occasion specially invites them. Above all, you will inculcate the necessity of fervent prayer to Almighty God, that He may enable them, by the grace of His Holy Spirit, to fulfil the engagements they undertake, and to walk faithfully in the paths on which they enter.

None are to be admitted as candidates who are under the age of fifteen years; and even if they have attained this age, it will be better to defer presenting them until another opportunity (which, God willing, will be afforded at no distant period), unless you are fully satisfied of their disposition to partake of this rite, as one of the means of grace, in an intelligent and pious spirit. It seems essential that the catechumens should possess at least such a general acquaintance with Scripture, and with the truths of the Gospel, as will preserve them from the sin of making an unmeaning profession, without being able to give a reason for the hope that is in them. Christian knowledge is indispensable to Christian practice.

A notice will be found in the inclosed paper, of the day and place appointed for the Confirmation of your parishioners; and I request you to exhort them to a decent and devout behaviour, not only during the service, but also in going to, and returning from church; accompanying them yourself as their Pastor, and delivering a list of their names and ages to me in the chancel, after the conclusion of the ceremony. Each candidate must be provided with a separate certificate, signed by yourself, in the following form; "*A. B. examined for Confirmation, and approved of by me, C. D. officiating minister of E.*"

The candidates must be desired to be early at the church, as none can be admitted who are not in their places before the commencement of the prayers. They are also to be required to bring their prayer-books with them.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your affectionate Brother,

C. R. WINTON.

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As the opportunity for Confirmation is a very important period in a parish, and one upon which God's blessing may especially be asked and expected, you are all entreated to pray for a spiritual blessing upon this parish, on the present occasion. The minister will attend, at his room in Sutton, on Thursday next, at eight o'clock in the morning, to offer up prayer for this purpose, with such persons as may desire, and be able to join him.

## XVII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

23 Aug. 1935.

WITH the Calendar this week there will also be given to you two Tracts.\* One is to explain to you *what is Confirmation* (this you will receive on Sunday morning); the other is to shew to every person in the parish *how each is personally concerned in the Confirmation*; and what is the particular duty of each upon the occasion: this tract you will receive early in the week. They contain that which I urge upon you all as being especially "the present truth." The first tract repeats the information which was given to you more largely at the last Confirmation, three years ago. Concerning this I desire to apply *the whole* of the text referred to above (2 Peter i. 12.). The subject of the second tract requires very serious consideration. May God put it into all your hearts to consider and act upon the instruction there given. To assist you in the duty there urged upon you, I intend every week, while we are preparing for the

\* These Tracts, together with those subsequently mentioned, are published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co.

Confirmation, to meet any of you who like to join me, that I may lead you in prayer for the object proposed. This shall be on Tuesday evenings, at the Rector's Room, in Sutton, at half-past seven; and (after the present week) on Thursday evenings, at the same hour, at the School-room. The places are thus arranged, that the inhabitants of both villages may, without inconvenience, be enabled to join at least once a week. The hour is also chosen for the convenience of those who are at work in the fields: and as it is a sincere heart, rather than much speaking, which is required, not more than twenty minutes will be occupied on each evening; so that every body who attends may reach their homes by eight o'clock. In the present week there will be no occasion to meet specially for this purpose on Thursday, as on Friday all the persons who are Sponsors in the Parish are invited to attend at the School-room; and any one who is not a Sponsor, but who wishes to join them in prayer, may attend likewise.

The parents of those who are of proper age to be confirmed are requested to consider the notice that is given at the end of the Calendar, that they may send them to give their names at one of the times mentioned, if they have not already done so.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that a spiritual blessing may attend the approaching Confirmation.

## XVIII.

## A LETTER FROM THE RECTOR OF WONSTON TO EVERY FAMILY IN THE PARISH.

Wonston Rectory, August 24th, 1835.

MY DEAR FRIENDS—

I HAVE often told you of the importance of having prayer regularly, morning and evening, in every family in the Parish. Have you family prayers in this house?

If you have not, you have tried God's patience a long time; for is it reasonable to expect a blessing upon your family, if you do not care for a blessing enough to ask for it? Is it reasonable to expect that your children will grow up to think of God, if you do not shew that you remember that all your mercies come from Him? Thank God then, that He has had so much patience with you: do not try that patience any longer, but begin family prayers now. There is a particular occasion for your doing so at this moment. I explained to you, in the Sermon last Sunday morning, the duty of every person in the Parish to pray for a blessing on the Confirmation for which we are now preparing; and I shewed you, at the same time, the great encouragement God gives you to induce you to do this. The whole matter is further explained in the two tracts which I have sent to each of you this week. Having so great encouragement, take this opportunity of beginning family prayers, for the purpose of asking especially for this blessing. I send you, on the other side, a prayer that you may use in your family, morning and evening, for this purpose. I pray that God may send a blessing into your house from the use of it.

If you have family prayers, be thankful that He has put it into your heart to act thus already; and do not fail, when



you kneel down together, morning and evening, to ask for the blessing of the Holy Ghost upon the present opportunity, which is offered to so many, of making a profession that they are Christians. If you are at a loss for words in which to do this, you may make use of the form of prayer on the other side: and may God bless the use of it to your own souls.

I wish also to put each of you in mind of the duty which is urged upon you at the end of the Tract No. II., which shews you how every one in the parish is concerned in a Confirmation. I mean the duty of oftentimes lifting up your heart to God, in a few words, upon the subject. For fear any of you should neglect this for want of knowing what words are best, I recommend you, many times in every day, secretly to say, *O God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, send the blessing of the Holy Ghost upon us, at this Confirmation.*

Grace, Mercy, and Peace be with you all,

Your affectionate Friend and Pastor.

## A PRAYER

*To be used by the Families in this Parish until the Confirmation takes place.*

ALMIGHTY God, we confess that there is a great deal of sin and wickedness in this parish, at which Thou art justly offended: we confess, also, that this family must share in the blame of giving Thee this offence; because we have not stood against the evil as we ought to have done; and have not set such an example of godly obedience in all things, as we might have done, according to our knowledge, and the means of instruction Thou hast given us. We desire to humble ourselves for all these things; and we beseech Thee, for Jesus Christ's sake, not to visit this parish according

to our evil doings, but spare us, good Lord—spare this people, and leave us not to continue in sin and carelessness. Thou hast given us many means of grace, for which we desire to thank Thee; and Thou dost now afford a special opportunity for the people of this parish to turn to Thee, and declare that they are Thy people. We pray Thee to send the Holy Spirit at this season. Give wisdom to the minister whom Thou hast placed amongst us, that he may know how to instruct the young and ignorant; and do Thou draw them to Thee. Give grace to all who have not yet been confirmed; and, by Thy Holy Spirit, make them serious, sincere, and firm in the profession of religion; and so bless them, and us, that we may all henceforth live in this world as Christians ought to live, and in the world to come, may live with Christ for ever. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

OUR FATHER, &c.

THE grace of our Lord, &c.

## XIX.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

30 Aug. 1835.

THERE are many persons in the parish, not confirmed, who have not yet come forward to express any desire upon the subject: these must be informed of the situation in which they will stand, if they continue to refuse or neglect to avail themselves of the opportunity now afforded them; and for this purpose, two more tracts will be printed upon the subject.

The persons who have already expressed a desire to be confirmed have been classed into seven different portions,

or classes. For convenience sake these are numbered: the numbering has nothing to do with any difference in knowledge, or merit; but the numbers stand as the classes will come in the week; thus,

CLASS No. 1 will attend at the Rector's room in Sutton, every Tuesday evening, at six o'clock exactly.

CLASS No. 2 will attend at the Rector's room, every Tuesday evening, at eight o'clock exactly.

CLASS No. 3 will attend at the Rector's room, every Wednesday afternoon, at one o'clock.

CLASS No. 4 will attend at the school-room, every Wednesday afternoon, at half-past five o'clock.

CLASS No. 5 will attend at the Rector's room, every Thursday afternoon, at two o'clock.

CLASS No. 6 will attend at the Rector's room, every Thursday evening, at half-past six o'clock.

CLASS No. 7 will attend at the Rector's room, every Friday evening, at six o'clock.

The parents and sponsors of the candidates are requested to urge them to attend regularly, every time the class to which each belongs is appointed; and, as the time for seeing each will be but short, and as there will be some occupation immediately after most of the hours fixed for the classes, the candidates ought to take care to be as exactly in time as possible.

Make it a subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that the instruction given to the persons to be confirmed may be blessed to each of them, by the gracious power of the Holy Ghost.

## XX.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

20 Sept. 1835.

WHEN there was a Confirmation three years ago, there were in the parish 141 persons of proper age to be confirmed. Exactly 100 of these applied to the minister, but forty-seven of that number left the instruction, and declined Confirmation; so that only fifty-three were confirmed; and there then remained eighty-eight persons in the parish who allowed the opportunity to pass. Since that time fourteen of these have left the parish, and three have died; so that only seventy-one of these persons remain. Of these, twenty-one have come to the Rector to take advantage of the present opportunity for confirmation, seventeen of whom had applied before, but declined, and four had not applied at all upon the former occasion. Within the last three years, no less than sixty-one persons have been added to the number of those who are of proper age to be confirmed; either by the children growing up, or by new persons coming into the parish. This makes the whole number 132. Of those who have been added in the last three years, thirty-five have now applied to be confirmed; making in all fifty-six who are at present under instruction, and leaving seventy-six persons in the parish who have hitherto declined to come forward and shew their desire to make the profession that they are Christians.

These thirty-six persons (and especially the fifty who have been spared to have another offer) after neglecting the first are earnestly desired to consider what they are doing. By not expressing a wish to be admitted amongst the body of pro-

fessing Christians they plainly shew that their inclinations lies in the opposite direction; for there is no such thing as remaining neuter between God and his enemies. Every man and every woman must give up the devil, the world, and the flesh, or they must give up Christ. If any one has an excuse to make, he will find his case considered in the first part of the Tract No. V, which will be sent round this week. Those that have no excuse to make may look for their case in the second part of the same tract. If after reading this, any person who is not yet confirmed has any objection to make, with a sincere desire to find out the right way, I invite every such person to come to me and state his difficulty: you may be sure of being kindly received. It is better to fix a time for this purpose; and therefore I appoint Wednesday next, at the vestry room, in the church, either half an hour before the evening service, or immediately after the lecture.

I besides give notice, that, though little time is left for preparation, I am still ready to receive the names of every person who may now desire to be confirmed; and that I will do my best, by additional instruction, to make up to them for the time which they have allowed to pass by.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may put it into the hearts of the seventy-six people in this parish, not to neglect the opportunity of professing, with sincerity, that they are Christians.

## XXI.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

27 Sept. 1835.

As the instruction to the candidates for Confirmation proceeds, and is drawing to an end, your minister reminds you of the duty of prayer which he pointed out to you in "the Word," on the 23rd of August last; and he desires to stir you up by way of remembrance. By the word of God, success is made to depend more upon the prayers of the people, than upon the instruction of the minister, as means which are used to produce a blessing. Instruction has been given to the candidates—have earnest and faithful prayers been offered up by the people? Let nothing prevent this, nor slacken your diligence and earnestness in fulfilling this duty; especially in the use of the family prayer with which you have been furnished. There is much to encourage us—the candidates have hitherto attended the classes very regularly; and have not only listened very attentively to the instruction, but most of them have shewn much seriousness, and have remembered what they have heard. This should encourage us to continue instant in prayer, that God, for Christ's sake, would give the Holy Spirit to bless the present means of grace. Several more persons have, during the last week, expressed a desire to come to Confirmation. The Tract No. VII. will be sent round the parish with this Calendar. It contains a short account of the instruction last given to the candidates, and it may be profitably studied by all the flock. The three last sermons explained the subject it refers to; and as there were no text papers for those sermons, the texts pointed out in this



tract may serve instead of text papers, to bring what was said to the memory.

It is very important that the persons to whom the latter part of Tract No. V. was addressed should really read the Epistle of St. Jude, as they were advised to do. To prevent as much as possible their neglecting this, the whole letter has been printed very plainly, in the same form as the Confirmation Tracts, and will be sent round the parish. May God bless his own word in strengthening the weak, and in converting the gainsayers.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may not permit the sins of the people of this parish to hinder the blessing upon them for which we have been praying.

## XXII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

4 Oct. 1835.

THE third instruction to the candidates for Confirmation will be sent round the parish in Tract No. VIII. with this; and the subject of it calls for particular attention by all. Another Tract No. IX, will afterwards be published, containing the instruction given to the candidates concerning the Communion, and the means of continuance in the faith. Tract No. X, will, however, be printed first; because it will be the address given by the minister to the candidates, at the time they receive their certificates. This address will be referred to in the Wednesday Lecture, when a suitable passage of Scripture will be explained, instead of the usual exposition of the Epistle to the Romans.

The Communicants in the parish are particularly invited to attend the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper this day ; as upon that occasion the candidates for Confirmation will remain in the church, to witness the Communion ; and the presence of persons whom they know may tend to encourage the young people—specially if they have been accustomed to regard them with respect, as persons who, at home as well as in the church, adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. How important it is that those who make a distinct profession of religion by joining themselves to the Table of the Lord, should consider the effect which their example has upon those who will take their notion of religion very much from what they see them do. In the afternoon the candidates will have an opportunity of hearing, in a solemn manner, the vows which they are about to renew ; for, instead of the Epistle for the day, the Service for the Order of Confirmation will be explained ; so that all the congregation may be able to understand it when it shall be used next Sunday.

After the general instruction and examination which has taken place, the minister will occupy this week in addressing privately each of the candidates upon giving them their certificates ; and as this is a duty of great importance, it ought to be the subject of much secret prayer with all, that a blessing may rest upon the personal application of what has been taught. To assist you in this duty, the same opportunity will be afforded you as hitherto, on Tuesday evening, and on Friday evening ; on which latter occasion, such of the Sponsors of the persons about to be confirmed as may still be living in the parish are particularly invited to attend. Friday will be a day specially set apart for prayer and humiliation by those persons who may feel disposed to take this mode of assisting the minister in seeking for a blessing on the Confirmation. On that morning, at eight o'clock, he will be

at his room in Sutton, to offer up prayer upon the subject; and on the following morning, at the same hour, in the school room, after all the preparations shall have been completed. May we be all blessed with a prayerful and humble spirit, at this important season.

## XXIII.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

11 Oct. 1835.

THE interesting service, which has been the subject of so many prayers in the parish, will be now administered; and those who have prayed for a blessing on it during the time of preparing the candidates, will not, I trust, be backward in prayer, that increased grace may be given to them in the Confirmation itself. As might have been expected, there is every reason to believe that the Communion of last Sunday has been made a means of helping to solemnize the minds of those who are about to be confirmed; and, for the purpose of keeping up this solemn feeling, which it is so important to encourage, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered again on next Sunday, to afford an opportunity to the persons who have confirmed their baptismal vows, to take advantage of the privilege of thus remembering the death of Christ, if their hearts are disposed so to do. It was truly gratifying to find so many of the Communicants desirous of encouraging the young people last Sunday; and it is to be hoped that an equal desire to help in strengthening and establishing their good resolutions will be shewn next Sunday, by the attendance of as many of the Communicants as



can possibly make it convenient. Above all, they should be earnest in prayer that the Communion may be a blessing to the newly-admitted members.

The tract, No. X, containing the address of the minister to the candidates for Confirmation when he gave them their certificate that they are approved, has been sent to every house in the parish. I beg to call the attention of the parishioners specially to the first part of it; and while I entreat them all to abstain from judging, and not to fall, in any case, into the mistake which is there explained, I beg them also to expect that, in answer to earnest prayer, God will change the hearts of those for whom such prayers have been made. This is the best way to prevent those uncharitable opinions which will often rise up, when any that have been careless are beginning to become serious. Instead of judging what any person is likely to be from what they have been, faith in prayer would lead us to remember what the Spirit of God can make even the chief of sinners; and to look forward with the hope that He will shew His power in those for whom we pray.

A paper containing some instructions concerning the morning service is given with this; and it would be well for every person to bring it to church with them in the morning.

Make it a subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God's blessing may fully accompany the present Confirmation in this parish.

#### TO THE CANDIDATES.

All the candidates are to attend at the school-room on Sunday morning, where the Rector will meet them at exactly a quarter before ten o'clock. They must bring with them the certificates which he has given them.

Every one who can read is to bring a Prayer Book; and

those who have not got Prayer Books, must inform the schoolmaster, or the district visitor, before Sunday; and they shall be provided with them on that morning, when they come.

They will proceed with the Rector to church, and take their seats on the benches under the old gallery. The young women will sit in the front benches, and the young men behind them. The young women must take off their bonnets, and give them to the persons appointed to take care of them until the Confirmation is over.

When the order of Confirmation begins, they must turn to the service in their Prayer Books, and attend to what is said. The Bishop, from the pulpit, will put the question to them altogether; and every one must answer "I do," in a voice that can be plainly heard.

After the Bishop's prayer he will go to the chancel; and when he is seated there, the young women, and afterwards the young men, will go to the communion rails. Twelve at a time will kneel to receive the blessing: the whole twelve will remain at the rail until the Bishop has done: they will then rise and go back to their seats: the next twelve, who have been waiting in the aisle, will kneel at the rail: and so on, until the whole have been confirmed.

When the Bishop goes back to the pulpit, the confirmed persons will all kneel down in their places, repeating the Lord's Prayer after the Bishop; and afterwards joining secretly in the prayers which follow. They will then rise and stand while they receive his address to them, though all the rest of the congregation are sitting.

After the whole service is over, they must remain in their seats until the rest of the congregation shall have left the church, when the Rector will come and speak to them. The young women shall have their bonnets given to them again, and the whole may depart.

## TO THE SPONSORS OF THE CANDIDATES.

The sponsors who have been invited to attend, according to the order of the Church that every person who is confirmed "shall have a godfather or a godmother as a witness of their Confirmation," will be good enough to meet the Rector and the candidates at the school-room, at a quarter before ten o'clock exactly.

They will afterwards proceed with the young people to church: and seats will be provided for them in the chancel, where they may more conveniently witness the Confirmation of their god-children.

## TO THE CONGREGATION.

The parishioners are requested to remember that divine service will be earlier than the usual hour. It will begin at half-past ten exactly.

As the seats under the old gallery must be occupied by the candidates, the persons who usually sit there are requested to find seats in other parts of the church; and those who have pews are requested to admit any persons who may be in want of seats, after their own families are provided for. Such seats at the disposal of the Rector in the new gallery as are not occupied by his family, will be open to any who want places.

## XXIV.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

18 Oct. 1835.

LAST Sunday was indeed an important day in the parish; and it may be hoped that the effect of it may be felt, not only at



this time, but in eternity. Fifty-two persons in this parish pledged themselves, before God and the congregation of Christian people who were assembled upon the occasion, that they would live as becomes the children of God, under the hope that they *are* the children of God. This solemn promise will be a great blessing to them if, by the help which is offered to them, they keep it: or it may prove a fearful condemnation to them if they refuse the help which is offered to them, and deny by their works the Lord, the Father, the Master to whom they have professed to belong. To assist them in the remembrance of their solemn promise, and to enable them to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants to their lives' end, the Holy Communion is one of the principal means appointed by Jesus Christ. This refreshing and enlivening of our memories and our hearts, and this pledge of Christ's mercy in dying for us, is open to all the newly admitted members. Much instruction has been given them on this subject, both publicly and privately; and if any one is yet undecided as to what he ought to do, he may freely come to the minister to "open his grief." Do not let such a one put off deciding with the thought that he can better make up his mind by-and-bye. Satan will take great advantage of the put-off time. And if anything makes you afraid to remember Christ's death now, it is not the least likely that you will find it easier to remember it, because you lay aside the thought of it for the present. Every body in the parish is recommended to read, at this time, the two exhortations which are placed in the Prayer Book, directly after the prayer for the Church Militant in the Communion service.—Most of the instruction which has been given concerning the Communion will be printed soon, in Tract No. IX.

As the Confirmation is now passed, it is with pain that I warn those who have neglected the opportunity, of the distressing situation in which they stand. I call upon them

to read Tract No. V again, and to consider what were the excuses they made to themselves for letting the opportunity pass. They will find that the excuse, whatever it may be, will not serve their purpose before God. May God give them grace to desire to make a good profession of the name of Jesus Christ before the Church, that the names which they have received in baptism may not sound like a mockery whenever they are called their *christian names*, since they have refused to lay their claim to their baptismal privileges as Christians. After the "Word" of the 20th of September (No. xx), ten persons out of the seventy-six came forward to be confirmed: and five of these were of the number who had neglected the previous opportunity, three years ago. Still there are about sixty-six persons now in this parish who have never been confirmed: and fifty-two of these have had two opportunities, and have neglected both. May God, for Christ's sake, speedily give to each of them a better mind.

## XXV.

PRIVATE EXAMINATION OF THE  
CANDIDATES.

At the private examination of the candidates for Confirmation, who had passed through the course of instruction in the autumn of 1835, the minister, after speaking to each, noted down some short memoranda of the general result of the conversation. As these supply important evidence of the effect of the system of instruction pursued, they are sub-joined, with the omission of any names which might lead to individual identification. The whole are given.

## A.

*Aged 36.* Came last Confirmation, but was advised to delay in consequence of gross ignorance—her rejection then

was the means of making her think—a great change since—has been admitted to the Communion, under promise of Confirmation this time. Complete in attendance. Approved. I spoke to her of the comfort I had had in the change which has taken place since the last Confirmation, and stated plainly my great distress at the gross ignorance I found upon that occasion. She related, in the simplest and most touching manner, the progress of her mind and her gradual sense of ignorance and conviction of sin—her encreased happiness—the way she resisted the people who spoke against Confirmation. Had very much comfort in giving her the ticket—Spoke of her husband—promised to speak to him and to pray for him.

## B.

*Aged 16.* Was at the National and Sunday Schools. Taken away by her father—went on badly for some time—since gone to service. Much changed latterly, and keeps very distinct from her mother and brothers. In consequence of her earnest desire was admitted to the Communion, under promise of presenting herself for Confirmation. In attendance omitted third time, Sacramental Meeting, and Communion Sunday; but was so occupied at her mistress's as to make it impossible for her to attend. Approved. Simple, and very unlike the rest of her family, who are all talkative and wrong-headed. I traced the time of her being at the school—all her hindrances and conduct—then shewed my change of feeling about her—she manifested much feeling—quiet tears flowed—said emphatically that her past life had been very sinful—was much helped by coming to the Communion for some time past. I told her my fears about her encreasing style of dress—warned her of the error of copying \* \* \* —she thanked me very properly—said she would take care—gave her the ticket with much satisfaction.

## C.

*Aged 16.* Attended all but fourth time—hindered in service, and Communion Sunday ill. Left Mrs. — in the course of the instruction, and has a place in —, but waits till our Confirmation. Approved. Touching simplicity and feeling—much sense of sin and sorrow—the tears stood in her eyes unaffectedly—she said she thought that she should be “able to do what I had wished her” in the instruction, and to keep her promises “by the grace of God.” She felt how weak she was, and that she could not do without it. Much regretted her illness on Sunday, that she was not with the others at the Communion—wished to attend the Communion, but is going to her place on Monday.

## D.

*Aged 15.* Came into parish since last Confirmation. Complete in attendance. A very attentive, serious boy. Approved—very, very satisfactory. Has been gradually deepening in the things of the Spirit for some time. Affectingly simple and humble—much knowledge, and grace working with it. I asked him of his own view of his state—“I am not comfortable, sir.” “Why?” “My sins offend God.” After much talk, which it was a comfort to draw out, especially as to prayer, he said he hoped that the Holy Spirit was with him. In answer to my question, why? he gave a plain Scriptural account of the working of the Spirit in producing conviction of sin. I praise God for this boy. He will come to the Communion.

## E.

*Aged 20.* Came since last Confirmation. Belongs to —. Parents pious and highly respectable as laborers. Has borne a character for lightness. Is engaged to be

married to —, servant at Mr. —'s. Came to me alone after third instruction, and expressed conviction of sin in a very simple and touching manner. In service at Mr. —'s. Complete in attendance. Approved. Very open, simple, and ingenuous, under very deep impressions of his sinfulness—feels strongly the responsibility of having been brought up by pious parents—talked freely, but not forwardly—had much desire to come to the Communion—would have liked to have joined last Sunday—will come next time. Very satisfactory. I warned him of certain companions by name, and of his dangers generally—invited him to come to me freely at all times.

## F.

*Aged 18.* Had her name put down last Confirmation, but did not attend instruction. An improvement in general conduct since she has been in service. Attended all but last Wednesday's lecture. Began by telling her my fears for her after she left the school. Explained her way of going on then—encouraged her by saying I remarked an alteration for the better latterly—she acknowledged the truth of all I said—in questioning her as to her knowledge, she said that, in being confirmed, she was going “to take her sins upon herself.” I asked her where they had been till now. This led to a conversation, in which she wept much, and seemed to feel—she also shewed more knowledge than from that answer I should have expected. She wished to come to the Communion, and had felt that wish last Sunday. Warned her, and gave her the ticket. She goes into the service of Mrs. — on Monday.

## G.

*Aged 16.* Was in National and Sunday Schools. A dull, heavy boy. Complete in attendance. Approved. Shewed

much more intelligence than from the dullness of his character I should have imagined. Said with energy he knew he had been going in the wrong way—meant to change—wished to be a Christian—exhorted him to continuance. Meant to attend the Communion.

## H.

*Aged 16.* Was in National and Sunday Schools. Attended Lad's Class afterwards very regularly. A boy of steady, good character, which he has never lost. Complete in attendance all but fourth time, when he was hindered by work. Approved. His knowledge has been steadily increasing since quite a boy, and his conduct has always been quiet and satisfactory. Within this last year, however, there has been more of spiritual attention and awakening. He said with energy that he was "a miserable sinner;" and that the thought of it made him very uncomfortable. I am quite satisfied about him, and gave him his ticket, promising to talk to him next week more fully about the Communion.

## I.

*Aged 26.* Have already admitted her to the Communion, after a severe illness, when she was much impressed. Complete in attendance. Approved. Referred to the conversation I had with her before admitting her to the Communion. Enquired as to her state since. Was satisfied with her answers. A quiet humble heart, really striving to live as a Christian.

## K.

*Aged. 18.* Attended last Confirmation but declined. Attended all but fourth time, when his parents sent word that he was detained at work at ———. Approved. Re-



mind him of his school-days with me—his conduct since—urged the importance of sincerity—told him of his peculiar temptations in his trade. He answered mostly by monosyllables, but with intelligence—professed sincerity—has quite sufficient knowledge—meant to come to Communion.

## L.

*Aged 21.* Attended last Confirmation but declined. Complete in attendance. Approved. Began by telling him the fears I had had when he first put down his name, and the way I have been encouraged by his conduct, attention, and answers. Reminded him of the difference of his conduct at the last Confirmation. He acknowledged it without hesitation, and regretted it—said he knew there must be a change—meant to change—felt how wrong it was—fully intended to keep the promise he was going to make. As to the Communion last Sunday, heartily wished he could have gone up with the Communicants—asked me to let him come next time. Warned him of evil company and its effects—that I was only answerable for his knowing enough, not for his sincerity.

## M.

*Aged 17.* Attended twice, then went to a service at Mr. ——— where she was prevented upon one occasion. Afterwards to Mrs. ——— where her mistress's illness prevented her, missed therefore third, fourth, fifth, and late class. Approved. Reminded her of school-days and subsequent sins—also of the warnings I have at different times given—she said she knew she was “a very wicked sinner.” I have known the feebleness and hypocrisy of former professions she has made, and therefore probed her deeply—at length she wept—I warned her of company and language at ———. As to the Communion, she was more communicative, and more naturally so

than before—said it was very solemn—that when I had read the confession, &c. a great many sins she had done came to her mind, and that she “did not dare to think of coming.” I told her how the Communion applied to her case, but promised to see her next week about it. Warned that my certificate only vouched for *knowledge*.

## N.

*Aged 14.* Complete in attendance. Approved. Fully informed, clear and plain in his answers—simple in his manner of expressing conviction of sin. Intends to come to the Communion—does not think himself too young—very satisfactory.

## O.

*Aged 35.* Attended last Confirmation, when I discouraged her, and she declined. Complete in attendance except last Wednesday lecture. Approved. Ignorant, but with such a gleam of light, and with such a desire to act up to it, that I felt it right not to impede. Her talk very simple, but a sincerity was marked upon it. Knew that she was going on in a bad way—hoped to change—said of her own accord, before I spoke of the Communion, that seeing it last Sunday, “gave her heart the shudders”—that she hoped to be admitted to it. Told me her hindrances—her husband, but spoke nicely about him. Warned—urged continuance—admitted to the Communion, and gave her the ticket.

## P.

*Aged 22.* Admitted to the Communion some time since, after much previous conversation. Complete in attendance, except Sacramental Meetings, when engaged in the . . . unavoidably. Approved. Had a very interesting conversation on his state in general. The tendency of past sin to

produce present unbelief, and the devices of Satan under such a state. He opened fully, and shewed his difficulties. I have no doubt that God's Holy Spirit is working in him, but the habit of infidelity raises up many continual snares in his way.

## Q.

*Aged 18.* In Mr. —'s service. Complete in attendance. Approved. Very difficult to get him out of monosyllable answers, but there was evident sincerity in the little he said—naturally reserved—at length, after an effort, spoke with much feeling of his own conviction of sin—knew what he was about, and meant all he promised. Had made up his mind on Sunday to come to the next Sacrament.

## R.

*Aged 15.* Complete in attendance. Found her dull. After some talk, in which she shewed knowledge, but not feeling of sin, I postponed deciding until next day —Approved. Before seeing her the second time, I told her plainly all my doubts and fears about her—she was evidently in a more serious tone, and she seemed really to feel. She acknowledged the general state of her heart; and said she fully meant to do her best to fulfil what she was going to promise. After much warning and exhortation, I told her that her knowledge was enough to justify me in giving the certificate, but that I felt more comfort in giving it now than I should have done before. She wished to come to the Communion.

## S.

*Aged 17.* Attended last Confirmation, but declined. Attended all but fourth time, when he was delayed in . . . . Approved. Spoke very decidedly that he was convinced that he was a sinner, and that he was in danger—quite suffi-

cient knowledge—I warned him of what I knew of his general conduct since he left the school—he did not deny—said of his own accord that he hoped, “after seeing how he went on for a few weeks,” to come to the Communion. I shewed him that this was putting the cart before the horse—that he must seek the help first, and use it afterwards. He agreed, and meant to come.

## T.

*Aged 16.* Attended last Confirmation, but declined. Complete in attendance. Found her very indisposed to acknowledge sin. Pressed her hard, and from her state at last I spoke more severely. She then said yes, she had been wicked, but she did not say it in a way to shew repentance. After some very strong exhortations, I told her I could not give her a ticket without further consideration, and remanded her to Friday—Approved. Much plain talk with her—told her of her going to the beer-shop at —, her conduct in church with —, &c. As she found I knew so much, she freely told me more—said she really felt what a dreadful state she was in—seemed alarmed—promised to give up certain company by name. After a pause and additional prayer, and an assurance that I had before intended *not* to give the ticket, I gave it, upon the ground of her knowledge, and her promises of amendment through God’s grace.

## U.

*Aged 17.* Did not apply last time. Complete in attendance. Refused. Stated my knowledge of her character, after inquiring a little into her knowledge—her manner light and frivolous—her answers not with seriousness, or appearance of sincerity. Told her of her mode of spending her Sundays at —. She denied this. Then told her of her light and disrespectful behaviour repeatedly in church—my

own sight of it. She said she meant to change. I asked her how long ago her determination had been taken, for my own observations were made last Sunday, and I had reproved her for similar conduct the Sunday before, after she had had all the instruction. From this time she would not utter one word. I spoke to her for nearly a quarter of an hour, asking different questions, but with no answer. I then desired her to kneel down again, and prayed for her, and dismissed her, she not speaking a word more.

V.

*Aged 37.* Out of parish last time. Complete in attendance, except the first time, and sent then an excuse. Approved. Warned of danger in his business—pleasing many people—timidity and unfixedness. He seemed indisposed to attend the first Communion; but after conversation he said he would.

W.

*Aged 16.* Complete in attendance. Approved. Extremely dull in answering, but still shewing knowledge enough to justify my giving the ticket. Mere monosyllables—seems very little to feel—as to the Communion, thought it right to be done and knew that it was; but had not thought of doing it herself—promised to speak about the Communion to her next week. Warned her that my certificate did no more than vouch for sufficient knowledge, and gave it to her.

X.

*Aged 46.* Out of parish last time. Attended all but first time, and Sacramental Meeting. Approved. Told me, with a full heart, all his trials—severe ones through ———, and through ———, I shewed him God's purposes in these; and he said strongly that he felt that no trial should make him

alter the way he had now kept on for three years. I put him in mind of several false steps during that time, which he acknowledged. He mentioned one particular case of temptation, to go into the public-house on a Sunday morning, and how he escaped it.

## Y.

*Aged 16.* Attended last Confirmation, but declined. Complete in attendance. Approved. Had a very long and searching conversation with him—told him of facts which I knew of him—pointed out to him fully, and in plain words, his besetting sin. He was very much confused—acknowledged all. Explained to him that my approval went only to his *knowledge*, of which he has quite enough. Asked him his feelings on seeing the Communion last Sunday—very solemn—did he think of coming? No. Why not? “Because, sir, I am such a wicked sinner.” This was said with much emotion. I explained the application of the Sacrament to his case—told him to think on what I had said, and see me again after his Confirmation next week: then, under a protest as regards his sincerity, gave him his ticket.

## Z.

*Aged 16.* Attended three first times, then went to — on a visit to —; there she attended Mr. —’s lecture once. Approved. She explained her absence at —. I found her not much disposed to talk, and therefore I opened to her my own view of her state—she wept very much but said nothing, except in answer to a question, that she was “not in a right state.” I told her of her mother’s dying charge to me about her children, and my fears for herself; and then warning her that my certificate only went as to her knowledge, I gave it to her.



## A. A.

*Aged 18.* Attended all but fourth time, and then came, but did not know the change of the day—absent also last Wednesday Lecture—sleeps at a distance. Approved. Simple 'n expression—serious—apparently of a serious, natural habit—said he had been most of his time where religion had been taught. At school for seven years at Mr. — of —. Exhorted and encouraged him. He thanked me with evident sincerity for all the trouble I had taken about him. Meant to come to the next Communion.

## B. B.

*Aged 21.* Attended last Confirmation but declined—attended all but last Wednesday Lecture. Approved. I expected much trouble in deciding about this girl—but have been much pleased and surprised—she used to be almost half-witted, and certainly very sinful—I found that she had attended to the instruction much more than I had thought—In answer to my questions about her conviction of sin, I found her ready and unaffected in her answers—"I used to be one of the wickedest, idlest girls about the place, but I have left all that off." Since when? "Since the death of my little sister, a twelvemonth ago"—she wept at this—she had been much struck at the Communion last Sunday, and wished to come; but I preferred having another conversation with her first, and so appointed her next week.

## C. C.

*Aged 16.* Complete in attendance. Approved. In a nice state, though very difficult to draw it out—was nervous, but expressed a sense of sin in a way which I do not doubt was sincere. I warned her that vanity was the besetting sin she had to overcome, and she took the warning tolerably well—recalled her feelings when she was near dying. She stated that

she thought herself "too wicked" to come to the Sacrament, but had been encouraged last Sunday upon the whole and meant to come.

D. D.

*Aged 20.* Attended last time but declined—has had her banns called, and is shortly to be married to ——. Attended all but Communion Sunday, and was absent then because her banns were called in Church on that day for the third time. Approved. Very quiet and proper, but no great feeling. I told her the lightness of her former conduct; and she said in answer to a question that she did not think herself in a safe state. I pointed out the responsibility of her new state as going to be married. All was very proper, but nothing occurred upon which to found a more lively hope. She understands what she is about, and says she means to adhere to her promises—wishes to come to the Communion—shewed her that my responsibility rested with her knowledge and gave her her ticket.

E. E.

*Aged 15.* Complete in attendance. Approved. Gave a good account of what she was going to do in Confirmation. Said that she had lately "lived as a child of God"—but only since she had thought of Confirmation—a change was quite necessary—knew it could only be by the Spirit of God—prayed often—full purpose of continuance. I exhorted and warned her. She thought the Communion very solemn—much more than she had expected—had made up her mind to join it.

F. F.

*Aged 15.* Complete in attendance. Deferred—afterwards approved. A very afflicted child—bad health and deformed—

her mind hardly capable of understanding the matter—yet her conduct quite good as far as I have seen it, and known her. As her age is only just 15 I thought it right to defer her Confirmation. Finding that she felt my deferring her very much, I sent for her again, and after another conversation in which I was satisfied that her feeling was right, I considered that she is never likely to know more than she does, but that under the means of grace she may feel more, I therefore gave her the certificate.

#### G. G.

*Aged 25.* Attended last time but declined—attended all but fifth time ill, and Sacramental meeting—at work at a distance. Approved. Very ignorant but much improved since the last Confirmation. I put him in mind of his conduct then, and asked him what he now thought of what I then did: he said, “why, I ha’ found out that you be right, and I be wrong”—conviction of sin was seen through his rough way. As to Communion he thought of putting off taking it yet awhile—why? “because I be’ant hardly fit.” I said something about this, but promised to say more after his Confirmation next week.

#### H. H.

*Aged 16.* Complete in attendance. Approved. Could scarcely get anything out of her but monosyllables—knew, however, what she was going to promise—meant to keep it—prayed for the Holy Spirit to enable her—knew she had lived “in sin”—perhaps the most difficult of all I have yet had to get a plain view of her case—she was frightened and never spoke out of a whisper. I believe she is a good girl—had thought the Communion very solemn—had wished to attend it, but was going to her place at — on Tuesday.

## I. I.

*Aged 22.* Did not give his name till after the first time—attended since, all but the Sacramental Meeting, and last Wednesday's Lecture. Approved. An appearance of sincerity—some knowledge, but no pretence to more than he has. He seemed to feel, and stated that he knew he had been going on in the wrong way, and that he meant to change. Meant to attend the Communion.

## K. K.

*Aged 41.* Missed fourth and fifth times of attendance, and Sacramental Meeting. Approved. She has full knowledge—has been much with the Ranters. I explained to her that the ground of my certificate was her knowledge, and nothing else; but also warned her that her Confirmation made her a member of the Church by her own acknowledgment. I spoke of the errors of the Ranters—I believe her sincere and really impressed, but weak and wordy, with much mannerism. She told me her distress about her children, and the mode of supporting them—her grief at parting with them to go to their parish. I improved this to her present solemn promise. Was much hurt at not going up to the Communion on Sunday. Has communicated before at ——. I explained—will come next time.

## L. L.

*Aged 17.* Attended all but Sacramental Meeting. Deferred. Spoke to her mother to inform her that I think her knowledge is not sufficient yet—but that if before the next Confirmation I find an improvement, and she desires it, I will not refuse her admission to the Communion for want of Confirmation.

## M. M.

*Aged 22.* Complete in attendance, except at the Communion Sunday, when he went to — to see a dying sister. Approved. Spoke very openly—told me his history—his father a ——— stated fully that he knew he was a sinner, and had been going on in sin, but that he hoped to get out of it now—stated the grounds of his hope—very clear knowledge of plain truths. Had made up his mind to attend the Communion.

## N. N.

*Aged 20.* Came into Mrs. — service after the first instruction. Mrs. — immediately sent her, and she only missed that first time and the last Wednesday Lecture. Approved. I praise God for this person. Quiet, but deep feeling—told her, that knowing very little of her, I could only inquire the more diligently from herself. Found her knowledge correct and sufficient—then asked as to her own views of her state. After a pause, and an effort, she burst into tears, and said that sin was a dreadful thing. She had been a great sinner, but had found it out only now. I was, upon further inquiry, so convinced of the reality of the working of the Spirit in her, that I could not forbear offering up a prayer of thanksgiving in the midst of our conversation. I then pressed her to define to me what she meant by sin. She told me her whole history with great simplicity. The burthen on her conscience was leaving her father, with a young orphan family, and going to service in a fit of pride, because he reprov'd her. He has since forgiven her. Comforted her, and told her to come to me when she wished it. Will come to the Communion.

## O. O.

*Aged 19.* Attended for last Confirmation, but declined. Was at service at Mrs. —, at —. Begged to be allowed to attend here rather than there—consulted Mr. —, and, with his permission, received her. Having missed the first time, she attended only the second, when she said she was ill. Attended afterwards the late class and the last Wednesday Lecture. Approved. The most painful conversation I have yet had. I told her of the state she was once in when dying, and what she then said to me. I then opened to her plainly and fully the vileness of her besetting sin, using so much of particularity of circumstance as was necessary to let her see I knew all about her. Her colour came and went—I expected she would deny it, but to my great relief she acknowledged it all. I bid her then tell me her thoughts on what I had said. She expressed herself ill and confusedly, not knowing what to say; but she said she meant, with the help of God, to lead a new life. I then shewed her the dreadful consequences of the deceitfulness of her general character—this she bore very well. I told her, that had she denied what I said, I should have refused her the certificate; but that her promises to me were such as she ought to make, and I was satisfied that she had sufficient knowledge, and my responsibility went no further. I prayed with her a second time, and warning her, said that I should watch her. I gave the ticket. I said nothing about the Communion to her.

## P. P.

*Aged 19.* Spoke to her at her master's gate after the first time, and to her master to let her attend, having missed the first time. She omitted the fourth, and was detained in — by the rain on the Communion Sunday. Approved. Traced back the time when she was at school, and all her



conduct since—her conduct with the Ranters—public praying and preaching. She seemed full of shame, and answered properly, but in monosyllables. I then told her the source of it all—her vanity and self-conceit. She acknowledged the truth of this. Professed sincerity in her present promise—said she desired to be a child of God. Upon going she lingered some time, and seemed to wait to say something which she found it difficult to express. I encouraged her, but as she delayed too long, I told her to come to me next week to talk to me about the Communion. Then, under protest, gave her the ticket.

Q. Q.

*Aged 15.* Did not come till after the second time, then attended all but the late class and last Wednesday Lecture. Came to appointment, but would not speak so as to give me any knowledge of what she knew and felt—remanded her to Saturday at ten. Approved.

## XXVI.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth.—2 Pet. i. 12. .

11 Dec. 1836.

It is very important to the Church of Christ that her members should understand what their duty is concerning the whole body—that they should know what Christ requires of each in promoting the general welfare—and that they should feel how great a privilege it is, that each should be permitted to advance the benefit of all. This is one of the Ember weeks, when all the members of the Church are called to the duty and privilege of prayer, for the special purpose of obtaining, according to the scriptural means, a blessing upon the

persons appointed to minister in the Church ; while, at the same time the chief Pastors of the Flock are exercising that important part of their office "the ordaining elders" (Titus i. 5.) That we may not be backward in this duty, the whole of the pastoral instruction during this ember week, will have reference, in different ways, to this subject.

This seems a fitting occasion for calling your attention to the importance of taking great care in properly instructing persons concerning their duties and their privileges, when after having been baptized in infancy, they are confirmed at a riper age, as willing members of the Church. You all know well the circumstances connected with the two seasons of Confirmation which have occurred, within the last few years in this parish. But you are not generally aware how difficult it was for some of the persons who were confirmed, to give satisfactory proof that they possessed such knowledge as is absolutely necessary ; nor how hard it was for your Pastor to satisfy his own conscience, that they were informed enough upon the subject, to be able honestly to judge themselves concerning the solemn pledge they gave. It is wise to profit by experience, and therefore your Pastor intends in future that more time for calm attention should be given to this subject ; so that all persons desirous of being confirmed as members of the Church, may have full opportunity of knowing what they are about. For this purpose it is intended to arrange a Confirmation class, in preparation for the Confirmation which may be expected to take place in the year 1838. This class will be required to attend the minister once a month, beginning with the month of January 1837. It will be divided into two parts ; one part including all young persons, who are now arriving at the proper age ;—and the other part, including all persons who are beyond that age, but have not yet been confirmed. Arrangements as regards hours ; &c. will be explained in time ; in the mean while, all persons of

the age of thirteen and upwards, who look forward to be Confirmed at the next Confirmation, should mention their names at once to the Rector, who will give them further information upon the subject.

## XXVII.

THE RECTOR OF WONSTON TO HIS  
PARISHIONERS.*26 July 1838.*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,

Another season of Confirmation is afforded to the parish; for this I desire to return thanks to God, because it is a most important occasion; which, if properly improved, may bring a blessing upon the people.

Previous to the Confirmation which took place in 1832, much instruction was given to you upon the subject; and it was the benefit which, through God's blessing, followed that instruction, that gave rise to the text papers; and afterwards to all those papers and tracts which have been printed and distributed amongst you.

At the Confirmation in 1835, the principal points of the former instruction were arranged into a number of small tracts, which were sent to every house in the parish: and as at that time you were all requested to take care of those tracts, I hope that you have kept them until now. I earnestly request every one to read them over again with attention; and particularly Tract No. II. which tells "how every one in the parish is concerned in a confirmation."

As some people are apt to think that they know enough of what they have read three years ago, though it may have long slipped out of their minds, I have arranged a short, plain, and scriptural account of "THE CHURCH," to shew what is the use of Confirmation. It contains only the heads of that part of the subject, for the purpose of

refreshing your memories, and directing your attention to the tracts where each of these heads is more fully explained, and where you will find much more information arising out of them. These heads are simple truths, so put into twenty paragraphs that the sense of one is joined to the sense of the other, in the same way that one link of a chain is joined to the next, so that all being united in regular order, one end of the chain is held up by the other. This short account of the Church is a chain of reasons, the last links of which shew the necessity for Confirmation, and are necessarily joined with the first link, which shews who are the people of God and the members of Christ's Church. The truth of each separate paragraph cannot be denied; and if each be true, all must be true. This makes Confirmation a very serious matter, which should be duly considered by each of you. If any one of you sincerely desires further information upon this subject, wishing to find the truth, and seeking it in a candid and teachable spirit, I invite every such person to come to me, and he will find me ready to converse fully upon the subject.

You will perceive by the Bishop's letter (which was read to you in the Church last Sunday) that he expects me to "be earnest and diligent in endeavouring to acquaint the candidates with the nature and design of Confirmation;" and that he desires me to represent "as well by suitable sermons, as by private instruction, the motives by which they should be influenced; the special duties to which they will be bound; and the benefits which they may expect to derive from a spiritual participation in this sacred ordinance." In willingly obeying the directions of the chief minister whom God has placed over us, I thus call your attention to the instruction on the subject of Confirmation formerly given; and I purpose (if God will) to employ

the Sunday morning sermons in such a regular course of Christian instruction, as will be suitable for the benefit of all the members of the Church, whether those already confirmed or those desirous of having their membership now confirmed to them. The subject of instruction which on the Sundays will be general, will be made the subject of particular instruction in private to the candidates through the week ; for which purpose they must attend in classes once in each week. The course of instruction is intended to be as follows :

Sunday, July 29. God the Father—and the means of knowing Him.

- Aug. 5. God the Son—and God the Holy Ghost.
- — 12. The hindrances to salvation ; and first, Satan.
- — 19. Secondly, the world ; and thirdly, the flesh.
- — 26. Faith as a motive of conduct.
- Sep. 2. Faith in its practical working of obedience.
- — 9. The means of continuing in God's service ;  
1st. prayer ; 2ndly, reading of the Scriptures.
- — 16. Thirdly, the Lord's Supper.
- — 23. The necessity for choosing the right, and  
leaving the wrong way. And on the
- — 30. the CONFIRMATION will take place.

While your Pastor will be thus endeavouring to perform the duty with which he is especially charged upon the present occasion, there is at the same time a special duty which belongs to every one of the flock ; who, having already received the benefits of Confirmation, are themselves deeply interested in the result of the admitting of recruits, as Christ's soldiers, into this part of the spiritual army of the Great Captain of our salvation. The nature of the instruction is fully explained in Tract No. II. already referred to. It may affect some more than others ; but it affects every one in such a degree as makes it a duty to do something to help



on the endeavours of the Pastor. Parents are most bound to this duty—then sponsors—then masters—then kindred. But besides these direct ties, friends—neighbours—fellow-labourers—all are bound, in some way or other, to assist the work of promoting good order and christian instruction, and to try to induce young people to make their choice for good instead of for evil.

There are four different ways in which this important help may be afforded by the parishioners.

I. All persons who have any influence whatever over those who have not been confirmed, ought to use that influence in overcoming the reluctance which too many young people feel at seeking the minister for Confirmation. They ought to expose the wickedness and folly of persons who try to laugh them out of every serious thought. And when young people have had their names put down, every influence should be used to keep them regular in their attendance at all the times appointed for their class, or otherwise required by the minister.

II. Many people have a foolish notion, that to give any information to the minister concerning his parishioners, is like children *telling tales* about school-fellows. This notion often does a great deal of harm, in preventing the minister from forming a just opinion of some of his flock; and, if in ignorance he happen to encourage some bad character, there are always plenty of tongues to find fault with him, as if he were acquainted with that which everybody thinks it wrong to let him know. This works ill both for those who ought to be encouraged, and for those who ought not. Many young people are hindered by shyness, or ignorance, or false shame from coming forward, who in their hearts have really many good desires. If any person happens to know of a state of mind in some of the young people, which the minister might improve and help if he



knew of it, such a person ought to take an opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. And, in general, those who are properly interested in the Confirmation as sincere members of the Church, ought to communicate freely with the minister on all matters which, in the least degree, may tend to the better result of the Confirmation in every case. I hereby invite every one of my parishioners to act thus, whenever circumstances require it; and I promise that I will never give any one occasion to regret that he did his duty in this particular.

III. Every one in the parish may do much good by speaking in a proper manner concerning the Confirmation. Young people are often put to shame by the laugh of the idle and wicked companions, merely because they have no encouragement from others. If a number of respectable persons made it a rule to converse in a serious spirit about Confirmation with the younger people whenever they met them, the laugh of the few idle ones would have no power, because well disposed lads or girls would find themselves supported in resisting it. All lightness upon the subject should be discouraged; and every one should be a worker together with the minister in making its seriousness and importance be felt. An interest should be shewn in the particulars of what is going on; the subjects of instruction should be noticed as they are brought forward; and inquiries made of the candidates as to their progress. Such a course of conduct as this might greatly improve the whole character of the rising generation, by influencing them for good just at the time when the most important step of their lives is to be decided on.

IV. But there remains still one important duty to be mentioned, which is within the power of every Christian, whatever be his condition or his influence; and by which still more good can be effected than by any of the other

means. It must be remembered that however decent and well-behaved young people may be at their Confirmation, it is neither their profession, nor the Bishop's blessing, that can convert their hearts, and make them really spiritual members of the Church of Christ. This is the work of the Holy Spirit alone. It is the gift of the Holy Ghost that brings well-instructed members to make a sincere profession, and to act up to it—It is the gift of the Holy Ghost that turns the hearts of the rebels, and teaches them to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh—It is the gift of the Holy Ghost by which members are admitted into the true Church of Christ. How can this gift be obtained? BY PRAYER! and by God's great mercy it may be obtained through the prayers of one for another.

This blessed truth at once points out an important duty for every one who knows how to pray. They should frequently and earnestly lift up their hearts in secret prayer to God for a blessing upon the means afforded; and they should remember to bring the same subject before the throne of grace at their family prayer. I do not consider that I shall have obeyed the instructions contained in the Bishop's letter, unless I not only point out this duty to you, but assist you in the performance of it. For this purpose, I mean during the season of preparation, to attend at the School-room, at Winstan, every Monday evening, at seven o'clock; and at the Rector's room, at Sutton, every Thursday morning, at eight o'clock, to engage for a short time in prayer to Almighty God upon the subject, with such of the parishioners as may be able to meet me. Besides this I send you with this letter, a short prayer, which I earnestly desire may be used, until the confirmation has taken place, by every family in the parish at their morning and evening united prayers; in the full confidence that sincere prayer by the whole people, would

do more than anything else in bringing down God's blessing upon the occasion.

I cannot close this letter without warning all the parish against two mistakes, very commonly made concerning the certificate of approval which the minister is desired to give to those who are to be confirmed. The first mistake is that which people make who judge for the minister, and wonder how he could approve of this person, and of that person, that have received certificates; being (as they think) improper persons. The second mistake is that which people make who imagine that when the minister gives a certificate of approval, he considers the candidates to be in a really Christian state. These are very great mistakes, which may be easily remedied by remembering what the church requires in her members.

A person baptised in infancy was admitted as a member of the church, in consequence of a profession and promise made *for him* by others. Being of proper age, he is called upon to continue a member, making the same profession and promise *for himself*. The church does not pretend to judge his motives, but requires him to make a public declaration, taking it for granted that he is honest and sincere. The minister of the church has only to take care that the candidate understands what he is about, and does not make his profession and promise ignorantly; and also, that there is no open scandal in his conduct, sufficient to prove that he cannot possibly be honest and sincere. The certificate therefore means this;—‘that I have examined the candidate, and believe him to know enough of the truths of religion, and of the nature of his promise, to be able to understand it; and further, that I am not acquainted with any notorious evil conduct on his part, which would make it a scandal for him to profess, what in his life he openly denies.’ This is far from expressing an opinion concerning the state of the person's

mind, which may be a very proper subject for the minister's *private* conversation with the candidate himself, but which the minister is not warranted in acting upon whilst administering the *public ordinances* of the Church.

Commending you all to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and praying for the gift of the Holy Ghost upon you,

I remain your affectionate Pastor.

### PRAYER TO BE USED DAILY,

*Morning and evening, in every family in the parish, while the minister is preparing the candidates for confirmation.*

O merciful God and Saviour, who hast given us thy Gospel, and sent the Holy Spirit to carry it to the hearts of thy people, that such as shall be saved may be added to the church daily, give thy grace at this time to the minister of this parish; that he may have wisdom to speak thy word in season, to those who have not yet confirmed their profession of faith, and their promises to live as becomes, thy Gospel. Give also a large blessing to this people. Daily renew with thy Spirit those who are true members of thy Church. Change the hearts of the careless and the wicked; and grant that those who now profess thy holy name may be so defended by thy heavenly grace, that they may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until they come unto thine everlasting kingdom. Amen.

### SHORT WORDS OF PRAYER,

To be remembered and repeated at different times during the day, while the minister is preparing the candidates for confirmation.

O God! consider the parish at this time for good! give the Holy Spirit for Christ's sake!

OR,

Gracious Saviour! bless with thy Spirit the instruction of the minister at this time.

OR,

Merciful God! change the hearts of the people, and gather them into thy Church even now!

&c. &c. &c.

## XXVIII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

29 July, 1838.

A letter has been sent round the parish this week, to which your Pastor calls the particular attention of every one of his parishioners. Several persons, who have not yet been confirmed, did not give in their names last week. They are invited to do so without delay. Those who have any difficulty in their minds upon the subject are advised to read the Confirmation Tracts No. I. & V., which were sent round the Parish in 1835. They had better also consult with the minister. An account of the general state of the Parish, as regards the number of persons confirmed and unconfirmed, will shortly be given, that the true state of the Church amongst us may be known.

The persons receiving confirmation instruction will be arranged in seven different portions or classes, each of which will attend the minister once a week: the instruction of each class will last for about an hour. For convenience sake, the classes will be numbered; the numbering has nothing to do

with any difference in knowledge or merit, but the numbers stand as the classes will come in the week—thus,

CLASS No. 1. will attend at the Rector's room, in Sutton, every Tuesday evening, at half-past six o'clock exactly.

CLASS No. 2. will attend at the Rector's room, every Tuesday evening, at eight o'clock exactly.

CLASS No. 3. will attend at the Rectory, every Wednesday afternoon, at two o'clock.

CLASS No. 4. will attend at the Rectory, every Wednesday evening, at half-past five o'clock.

CLASS No. 5. will attend at the Rector's room, every Thursday afternoon, at one o'clock.

CLASS No. 6. will attend at the School room, every Thursday evening, at seven o'clock.

CLASS No. 7. will attend at the School room, every Friday evening, at six o'clock.

The parents and sponsors of the candidates are requested to urge them to attend regularly, every time the class to which each belongs is appointed.

## XXIX.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

19 Aug. 1838.

THE harvest work, which calls almost every body into the field at this season, makes it impossible that many of those who have expressed their desire for Confirmation should be able to attend the instruction your Pastor is desired by the Bishop to be diligent in affording them. It will be absolutely



necessary to make some other arrangement than that mentioned in the last "Word," or else the opportunity for preparation will be altogether lost. As this is the case, your Pastor has determined to give private instruction on the Lord's day, to all those whose work prevents them from coming to him on the other days of the week. Such persons shall be divided into three different classes. All the young women must come to the Rectory, at nine o'clock in the morning: the men, who are of a more mature age, will form the second class, and come to the Rectory at half-past two o'clock in the afternoon; and the young lads will form the third class, and come to the Rectory at half-past three o'clock in the afternoon, on Sundays. This plan has been arranged after much enquiry and consideration, so as to suit the convenience of the different persons as far as possible; and it is hoped no one will allow trifling excuses to prevent their regular attendance.

The great difficulty of arranging this plan has been, so to manage as not to give up the Sunday afternoon instruction in the school-room. This is of great importance, as it affords a proper and useful mode of occupying the time in the middle of the Lord's day, to a number of persons in the parish who have found it of great benefit. As your Pastor cannot feel it right to give up this means of instruction, although at that hour he must himself be occupied in privately instructing the Candidates for Confirmation, he has determined that, during the season of harvest work, it shall be carried on by the reading of a portion of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, which has not yet been published. As your Pastor has written this expressly for the advantage of his own flock, he feels that he himself will still be instructing those of his people who attend, although the words will be spoken by another voice. This will only continue as long as it is necessary for the confirmation classes

to be instructed on the Lord's day; and your Pastor prays that the Spirit of God Himself may employ this means of instruction to the benefit of the souls of the people.

### XXX.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

THE Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be administered next Sunday morning; and as there will be no other Communion until after the day appointed for the Confirmation, your Pastor intends to allow the candidates to witness that solemn remembrance of Christ's death, by which a continuance in membership with the Church is outwardly shewn, and the needful grace to continue serving the Lord, as one of the true Church, is sought for, and (when sought in faith) is obtained. Upon such an occasion it must be plain that the example of persons whose christian character commands respect, is calculated to produce a good effect upon the minds and hearts of those who are about to promise that they will live as Christians; and that they must be encouraged in seeking for strength to do so, through the means pointed out by their minister, when they see a large body of their neighbours taking that scriptural course. For these reasons, your Pastor specially requests each of the Communicants (that is the whole body of the Church in the parish) to make it convenient, if possible, to attend at the Lord's table next Sunday; and he prays that their attendance may bring forth a blessing on themselves, and on the candidates for Confirmation who will be present to see the service.

A Tract is sent round with this, being No. XI. of the series of Confirmation Tracts, ten of which were sent three years ago. It is AN ADDRESS TO SPONSORS. It applies not only

to Sponsors of the candidates for Confirmation at this time, but it explains also the duty of all Sponsors ; and, therefore, it shall be sent to every house in the parish : and the attention of all is particularly called to the subject.

It was intended to have sent to you this week a " Pastor's Account," shewing the state of the parish as regards the number of persons confirmed and unconfirmed, and as regards Church rules generally. Your Pastor has delayed this, however, for one week more ; because there are yet many unconfirmed persons who have not come forward of their own accord, to desire Confirmation. He wishes to afford them as much opportunity as possible to make up their own minds, before he closes up the Account, which must be a painful one, as long as it shews that any are determined to despise or neglect Christian privileges. He invites all persons who have not yet given in their names, to apply to him at any time in the course of this week ; and at the end of it he hopes to be able to send round the Pastor's Account in question.

The subject of the general instruction for this week, will be found in the first part of the eighth Confirmation Tract, sent round in 1835 ; from page 2 to page 9 ; and questions 1 to 12, at page 19 and 20.

### XXXI.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

2 Sept. 1838.

**THERE** are two classes of persons who appear in the account concerning Church matters which your Pastor is preparing ; and whom he feels it necessary to address with a particular warning at the present season of Confirmation. These are ;

first, those who, after having been formerly confirmed, began to join the Communion, but have since neglected that holy Sacrament; and secondly, those who, after having been formerly confirmed, have never joined the holy Communion at all. It is very important these persons should know the effect which is produced by conduct so inconsistent with their profession; and, in the hope of making them acquainted with this, another Confirmation Tract has been printed (No. XII), which is now sent round the parish. May God grant that a blessing may accompany this warning, so that a more serious attention may be excited in the members of the Church to the importance of their profession; and also, that a spiritual desire may be awakened in many to join the people of God at the table of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The subject of the general instruction this week, will be found in the last part of the eighth Confirmation Tract, sent round in 1835, from page 9 to the end.

### XXXII.

#### THE PASTOR'S ACCOUNT. No. IV.

They watch for your souls, as they that must give account.

Heb. xiii. 17.

16 Sept. 1838.

It is so very necessary that people should clearly know the situation in which they stand with respect to Christian privileges, that a minister can hardly take too much pains to make the subject plain to all his people, and applicable to each of them. There are two different ways in which the word **CHRISTIAN** may be understood. Sometimes it means one who is truly spiritual in the sight of God, by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost; and sometimes it means a person who, by *professing* to believe that which a true Christian believes, and

*promising* to live as true Christians live, becomes a member of the Christian Church upon earth.

There are but two ways in which any person can be received and considered as a Christian. One is according to the judgment and opinion which his neighbours may form of him ; and the other is according to the rules and arrangements of the Church. It would be a very bad way to submit every person's christianity to the opinion of his neighbours : it would be contrary to Scripture, and would lead to many evil consequences. The Church does not allow of such judging ; but makes certain rules which depend upon the regular *profession* of true religion ; and, though her rules cannot certainly point out who are the real spiritual Christians, yet they give all who keep them a claim to the name of Christians, without any reference to private opinion.

Now everybody may choose upon which footing they will lay claim to be called Christians. They may depend upon their neighbours' opinion of them ; or, they may comply with the Church's rules. Few persons would like to allow their christianity to depend on their neighbours' opinion ; and therefore, they wisely rest their claim upon church-membership : but those only are members, who are so *according to rule* ; and many persons, who would not like to allow the right of their neighbours to judge them, fancy themselves to be Christians, though they have no claim to be called so *by the rules of the church*. If they wish to be considered Christians, as belonging to the Church, they must, at least, keep her rules : if they do not keep her rules, they must give up their claim as members.

The Rules of the Church concerning membership have been so often explained to you that it is not necessary to repeat them here ; and these remarks have been made now, only to introduce the following account of the true state of *the church* in this parish. The numbers are taken from exact lists of

names kept by your Pastor ; and if any persons should be in doubt as to which list contains their own names, let them apply personally to the Pastor, and he will give them the information they require.

There are in this Parish 752 Inhabitants, not including strangers who are lodging here only for a time. Of these 398 are Male, and 354 are Female.

The only persons who have a right to be considered THE CHURCH (that is, those who are such according to the *strictness* of her rules) may be classed as follows :—

1. Communicants continuing to frequent the Lord's table 146
2. Their children, being baptized, and under the age of 15 years 104
3. The children (under 15 years of age) of persons who, having formerly communicated, have declined 56
4. The children (under 15 years of age) of those persons who have claimed the privilege of Christians in bringing their offspring to baptism, upon the ground of their own baptism or confirmation alone, although they themselves have never joined the communion of the church 107
5. Baptized persons between the age of 15 and 18 years; that is, those who have become of age to take their baptismal vows upon themselves since the last confirmation, and unconfirmed persons who have come into the parish since that time; to all of whom confirmation is now first offered here 83

These are the only persons in the parish who can —  
*claim* to be called the Church ; amounting to 496

To this number however, a charitable hope may lead us to add the following—

6. Persons who, having formerly communicated, have withdrawn from the Lord's table without being excommunicated by authority. These are what may



be called *self-excommunicated*; and as there is no hindrance to their return, but the want of a better mind in themselves, it may be hoped that they will again join the Church

47

7. Persons who have confirmed their vows, but who have delayed to join the Communion: these, like the last class, are only *self-excommunicated*; and, as they may be received whenever they desire to come, it may be hoped that they may be induced to avail themselves of the privileges open to them

143

These together amount to 190

Which with the regular members of the Church 496

Make together 686

The other inhabitants of this parish may be classed as follows—

8. Persons who, having been baptized as infants, *have refused* when they grew up to claim their baptismal privileges—

Of these have passed the confirmation in 1832, 38

have passed the confirmation in 1835, 22

60

9. Persons who have never been baptized

6

Making together 66

The general result stands thus—

Residents in the parish

*Within* the church—regular 496

irregular 190

686

*Without* the church—unconfirmed 60

unbaptized 6

66

Total number of persons in the parish 752

According to the above account, the following classes of persons are those who *ought* to come forward to be confirmed at the present season.

Class No. 5, 83,—Class No. 8, 60. Together 143.

The number of persons who have, up to this time, expressed their desire for confirmation at the present season, is as follows :—

|                                                                                                                           |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Persons who have only become of age (or come into the parish) since the last confirmation ;<br>(included in Class No. 5.) | 35       |
| Those who were of age (or who came into the parish) before the confirmation in 1835, but after 1832                       | 5        |
| Those who were of age before the confirmation of 1832                                                                     | 9        |
|                                                                                                                           | <hr/> 49 |

To which is to be added, persons who have been already admitted to the Communion, upon their expressing themselves “ ready and willing to be confirmed ;” and who were therefore included in Class No. 1

2

Present number of candidates

51

|                                                               |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Of 38 of age before 1832, have now come forward 9, leaving 29 |       |
| Of 22      ....      1835,      ....      5,      ..      17  |       |
| Of 83 now of age &c.,      ....      35,      ..      48      |       |
|                                                               | <hr/> |

143 who ought to be confirmed, come forward 49, leaving 94

It will be useful to know the results of the two last confirmations, which are as follows :—

53 persons were confirmed in 1832.—Of these 8 never joined the Communion at all ; and 45 communicated.—13 of these however, have declined ; and only 32 have continued.

51 persons were confirmed in 1835,—Of these, 20 never joined the Communion at all; and 31 communicated.—14 of these however, have declined; and only 17 have continued.

The number at the Confirmations together was 104.—Of these, 6 have died; and 29 are not now in the parish: so that only 69 of the whole number are included in the foregoing account. Of this number 20 are those who have never joined the communion (included in Class No. 7): and 19 have declined, after communicating for some time (included in Class No. 6.) So that the actual result of the two former Confirmations, as regards the present state of the Church in the parish, has been to add 30 continuing members to her Communion.

It may be well to complete this account by shewing the state of the Church in this parish, as regards the number of the members who are Sponsors; upon which subject an Address was lately sent round the parish.

The Rules of the Church in this respect have been carefully kept in the parish since the beginning of the year 1832.

Since that time, the number of infants who have been baptized, and received into the church, is 131.

If every Sponsor for these children had been a different person (being three to each infant) there would have been 393.

The number of *different persons* who have stood as Sponsors, is 186

Of these have come from other parishes, to stand for the children of their friends, 73

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Leaving the number of Sponsors in the parish 113

The number of Sponsors who have answered for  
 one child only is 43, for four 14, for seven 1, for ten 0,  
 two children 22, five 7, eight 3, eleven 0,  
 three 17, six 3, nine 2, twelve 1,  
 In all 113

Of these 5 have died, and 14 have left the parish ; making 19

Number of persons in the parish who are Sponsors 94

Of these have become *self-excommunicated* (in Class  
 No. 6) 22

So that the present communicants who are Sponsors are 72

The number of communicants who have never stood as  
 Sponsors (chiefly on account of age, or other circum-  
 stances) is 74

Which makes the total of communicants (No. 1) 146

### XXXIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

30 Sept. 1838.

ON the 22nd of July last, your Pastor sent you a "Prayer to be used daily, morning and evening, in every family in the parish, while the minister was preparing for Confirmation." Those who have prayed according to that prayer will feel the want of expressing their thanks to God, now that the preparation is over, and therefore there is sent to them the following—

PRAYER to be used daily, during the present week, morning and evening, in every family in the parish.—

O GRACIOUS and merciful God, who art always more ready to hear than we are to pray; we thank thee for all the help thou hast afforded the minister of this parish, in preparing those of the flock who have now confirmed their profession of faith, and their promises to live as becomes the Gospel. Give thy blessing in large measure to all his instructions; and grant that they may be as the good seed that brings forth fruit abundantly. Give grace to all those now confirmed to continue in the way they have chosen, and strengthen them by all the means of grace; especially grant that they may faithfully join in the Holy Communion, and daily receive thy blessing therein, that they may be enabled to walk worthy of the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

AMEN.

## EDUCATION.

### XXXIV.

#### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

15 Nov. 1835.

THE time is come for giving the children of the schools their rewards for the tickets which they have earned in the course of the year. The ticket day will be the Tuesday in next week. The money contributed by some kind ladies, which was mentioned in the Calendar, No. XXVII, May 31, will be given, on that day, to the ten mothers whose children have been most regular at school, according to the promise then made. I have very often urged all the parents to attend most seriously to the important duty of training up their children to be regular, attentive, and obedient in their early years; and of putting them in the way of being taught about Christ, as soon as they are able to be taught about sin, that they may learn how to resist it before Satan encreases his great power over them. I mean next year to help on these exhortations by adding a particular encouragement to such parents as really desire to do this duty. Some kind friends will enable me to do this, by contributing a number of different articles adapted to the comfort and convenience of the people. These shall be distributed as gifts in such a way as that the largest portion of them will fall to the share of those parents who have shewn the most attention to the real



good of their children in the course of the year. That this may be done fairly, some rules must be established, which will be strictly attended to during the year; and at the end of it, all the articles which have been collected will be put into a sort of sale, where the things may be bought, *not for money*, but *for tickets*, which will be given beforehand to the parents.

The following are the RULES by which the plan will be regulated :—

1. Between Michaelmas and Christmas, 1836, all the things which have been collected in the year will be arranged, and every article will be marked with the number of tickets in exchange for which it will be given.

2. On the day before the distribution, a number of tickets will be sent to the mother of every child in the National, Infants', and Sunday Schools.

3. The number sent to each mother will be regulated in the following way. One ticket will be given for every day that a child has actually attended at the school, morning and afternoon, without any reference to the excuses of sickness or work which may have been the reason, at any time, of keeping the child away.

4. As absence from the Sunday School is the neglect of a very important duty, two tickets for every such absence will be taken off from the number to be given, unless the child has been absent from sickness.

5. For every hundred tickets earned by a child for learning extra lessons in the Sunday School, ten tickets will be added besides to the number to be given to the mother.

6. An extra number of tickets will be given to the child and to the parent, when there has been continued general good conduct on the part of the child, and regularity in sending on the part of the parent the year.

7. If any child is kept away from the school after having been punished for any fault, five tickets will be taken off for every day, until the child returns to school.

8. If the parent come to the school to find fault with the management of any child, and makes complaint in the hearing of any of the children, twelve tickets will be taken off from the number to be given. (*Every complaint which is made to the Rector will be carefully enquired into; but no person is allowed to interfere at the school.*)

9. The distribution of the things in exchange for the tickets will be made on the children's ticket day. The parents must bring the tickets which will have been given them, and they may make their choice of any of the things which suit them best, according to the number of tickets marked upon each article. Any person is welcome to attend.

10. The rewards for the tickets which the children of the schools may have earned will be given in the same manner as the articles for the mothers; every child making their choice of what they will have in exchange for their tickets.

These are the rules for the sale *next year*, which are told to you now, that you may all know how to profit by the advantage. But as several articles have been already contributed, a small ticket sale will be made of them on Tuesday, November the 23rd, when the children will have their ticket day; and tickets in proportion, as far as the articles will allow, shall be sent, on the day before, to the parents, according to the general attendance of their children during the year, without more particular attention to the rules for next year.

Make it a subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may bless this plan to the encouragement of all the parents, and the real benefit of all the children in the parish.

## XXXV.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

10 Jan. 1836.

It is always pleasant to find that what has been planned for the benefit of others, produced the desired effect; and it is with great pleasure that your Pastor thanks God for the general effect produced by the Parents' Encouragement Tickets, in the parish. The attendance of the children has been much more regular in every way, within the last few weeks; and will I trust continue to be so.—The tickets shall continue to be sent exactly according to the rules.

There could hardly be a greater blessing to the whole parish than that which would follow if all the parents would work together with the minister in leading the children in the way of God's Word; not only in teaching them to read it, but specially in making them act according to it. If this were to be the case now, and for the years to come, the next generation of people in this parish would be generally much better, as well as happier. I am willing to give the parents full credit for the desire to do this! and to hope that the improved attendance of the children at the schools may be considered as proof of it. "Such a hope induces me to afford them an opportunity of doing still more in *working together with the minister for their children's real good*. There are many different faults and idlenesses very common amongst the children, to correct which much pains has been taken, though they still continue to be practised. One of these, for instance, is the careless and idle way in which some of the

children behave in Church :—another is the rude manner in which some conduct themselves in going home on the Lord's Day. Having tried many plans by which these and other things might be prevented, without using any such punishment as might be severe, I have determined now to afford the parents an opportunity of assisting me in bringing their children into a better and happier state. I intend for the present to leave, in a great degree, the punishment of such children as behave themselves improperly at school, or at church, in the hands of the parents : and all I require of them is, that they will make the offending children understand by their way of treating them, that when they have done wrong at school, they will not find their fathers and mothers pleased with them at home. It will not be wise to beat them ; it is only in very particular cases that beating is likely to do any good.

In future (for some time at least) every child who has attended the Sunday School, and behaved properly, shall take home a printed notice to that effect. These notices are to be kept, and for every four of them one Parents' Encouragement Ticket will be given. When the child brings home this notice there is no occasion to give praise for having deserved it. It only shews that he has done what he ought to have done, and that there is nothing against him that day. When any child comes home *without a notice*, it is a sure sign that he has been idle, or in fault, in some way or other ; and what the parents have to do, is not to beat or scold the child violently, but to shew by their manner, that the minister is right in putting them to shame, and to make them feel that there is a difference at home, when they have been careless at school or at church. Perhaps it might be well to give them less supper to eat, or to keep something away from them which they like to have. Parents who know the value of their children's souls will also see, that when a child comes

home without a notice of good behaviour it will be a proper occasion to mention it in their Family Prayer that night, by which the child may see the parent's feeling, and God may give His blessing to the correction.

## XXXVI.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

31 Jan. 1836.

FOR some time past very few of the lads in the parish have taken advantage of the class to which they might come on the Sunday mornings, to keep up the learning which they may have got before at school. Latterly however, within these two or three weeks, some of them have come again; and there appears to be a disposition amongst more to join the class. It is well to encourage this, as, by the blessing of God upon what is taught, it may bring them to know about Christ, and to turn to Him that they may leave sin. The parents ought to have influence over their children long after they are of proper age for this class: and, to encourage them to use that influence, in making their children of this age regular and attentive in future, two parents' tickets will be given to every lad who attends the Sunday Class, provided he is in his place at a quarter past nine o'clock. If he is not with the class till half-past nine, only one ticket will be given to him; and if he comes later he will have none at all. The tickets shall be given to them after the morning service, before they leave the Church, provided they have not behaved improperly during service time. The minister is often pained by seeing the lads very idle and inattentive

in Church: whenever in future this is the case with any one in the lads' class, the tickets will not be given; and the parent may understand that if the boy returns home without them, there has been some reason for it. In this case they ought to behave to them accordingly. It is very important that when children leave the National School soon, to go to work, that they should continue their learning as much as possible afterwards, by Sunday Classes; because at that early age, what has been learnt is soon forgotten, unless it is made to grow as the mind grows, and then it becomes fixed, and will last them for their lives. For this reason the young women's Sunday Class will be opened again to-day; and all those girls who are grown too old for the Sunday School are invited to come.

They must be at the school-room at nine o'clock, and all who are there at that time shall take home two Parents' Encouragement Tickets; if they do not come before twenty minutes after nine, they shall only have one; and if they come later than that, they shall not have any. The Tickets shall be given after Church, provided the minister has no fault to find with the girls' conduct during Service time, but if he has, the tickets will be refused.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may send the blessing of His Holy Spirit with the teaching of the lads and young women in these classes.



## XXXVII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

20 March, 1836.

As a great number of encouragement tickets have been sent to the parents of the children at the schools; and as the children have also earned a great many; it becomes necessary to collect them, and to give to each parent, and to each child one general ticket of the same value as the number of single tickets that they have got. Several reasons make it proper that this should be done. The single tickets are apt to be lost, but the general ticket, besides being given, will be registered in a book. It is well that the parents should know how many they have received. The children may gain more by finding out and learning the verses of Scripture on the tickets they have already earned; and it is not well to put off their saying them until they have too many together. The parents are to receive ten encouragement tickets for every hundred which the child obtains and learns, and it will be useful for the parents to know how their children's tickets stand in this respect. For these, and other reasons, it will be very proper to collect all the tickets together, once in about every three or four months. That there may be no mistake with respect to the manner in which the children are to learn and repeat the verses on their tickets, it will be useful, that what will be required of them should be explained to the parents. All the parents therefore who have any encouragement tickets are requested to meet the Rector this week; those who live at Sutton, can come to his room there at seven o'clock on Thursday evening; and those who live at Wonston, can come to the school-room, at

seven o'clock on Friday evening. They must bring with them all the tickets they have received (not their children's tickets); and they will be registered, and exchanged for one ticket of the value of the whole number. They will also then be informed what the children are to do, in order to have their tickets exchanged. One parent from each family had better make it a point to attend this collection meeting.

## XXXVIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

24 April, 1836.

THE tickets earned by the children in the schools, have been collected and exchanged during the last week; and the progress which the children have shewn ought to be the occasion of much encouragement to the parents, as well as to the minister and the teachers. One hundred and thirty-eight children have earned tickets. Of these, forty-eight have taken advantage of the offer to increase the number of their tickets, if they would learn the Scriptures that are printed on the tickets themselves—finding out, and repeating by heart, the different parts of the Bible from which the ticket Scriptures are taken, and which are not marked on the tickets. The forty-eight children have done this very satisfactorily; and, for the information and encouragement of their parents, the number of the tickets each child has said and gained, are placed opposite their names below. The time during which they have been earning these tickets, is from Advent Sunday, the 29th of November last, to April 10th, which is about four months and a half.

The children who have earned tickets, but have not taken advantage of the offer of increasing them by learning the texts on them, are not included in these lists.

The number of tickets the 48 children have earned is 2630—the number of tickets earned by the other ninety children 1750—making together 4380.

## XXXIX.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

7 Aug. 1836.

THE harvest having now begun, the children of the National School have had the usual holiday time allowed them, that they may be useful to their parents in the fields. Last year the children of the Infants' School had holidays at the same time; because it was considered a proper means of helping their recovery from the whooping cough, with which, at that time, many of them had been afflicted. For several years before that, the Infants' School had been still kept open; and, for the convenience of the parents, an arrangement was made, by which any of them were at liberty to take their children to school at any hour in the morning they pleased, when they went to their work, and to leave them under the care of the school-mistress until they returned home in the evening. It was thought that this would be an important help and comfort to the parents: but for the two years before the last, it did not appear to be felt as such by many of them; for only a few took advantage of the opportunity. As this seemed to be the case, and as the school-mistress is paid extra for this trouble (the fatigue of which is very great), it was not thought necessary this

year to incur the additional expence, without a sufficient advantage to the whole parish; and therefore the children of the Infants' School were told that they were to have harvest holidays, as well as those of the National School. During the last week, however, several parents have expressed a desire to take advantage of the offer which before was made, and to send their infants to school, if they would be received; and as your Pastor is willing to incur the expence, if a sufficient benefit results to the people, he has determined that the Infants' School shall open on Monday, as on former years; and that the children shall be received at the early hour in the morning: the parents must leave their food with them, and the children shall be taken care of, until they return from work. Those parents who have not yet sent their infants regularly to the school, but who mean to do so in future, may take advantage of this arrangement as well as the other parents.

## XL.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

14 Aug. 1836.

THE people are all busy about the harvest. This is as it should be. This increased occupation, however, fills up more time, and fatigues the body more than is usual at other seasons. It also calls people of all ages, and of all characters into the field together; and it is just when the bad are of necessity mixed up with the good, that Satan strives to take the advantage, by forcing those persons who would desire to follow good, to hear and see many things that are bad. This is particularly dangerous to the young people and children.

Because of the harvest it is holiday-time from school; but Satan makes it too often school-time to teach them evil: indeed he never gives any holidays from schooling, but is always trying to teach lessons of sin, which are too easily learnt. It is your Pastor's duty to warn you of this danger both to yourselves and to your children, that you may guard against it. With respect to the mode of guarding against this danger to the children, parents ought to be careful to keep them, as much as possible, from mixing with those who are notorious for using bad language: and when they do hear any thing evil, the parents ought to take an opportunity, when at home in the evening, of pointing out to the children the dreadful consequences of such sinful conduct. No fatigue ought to prevent this.

To assist the parents in stirring up their children to shew a real desire for learning, the following arrangements are made at the Sunday School, which are to continue during the harvest time.

1. As there may be a reasonable excuse for the children not learning their regular lesson, those who cannot say it will not be crossed.

2. This will afford an opportunity of seeing who really desire to improve themselves, and who are careless about it; and to encourage those who desire to learn, one ticket will be given to each child who learns the REGULAR lesson of the class *perfectly*.

3. For several weeks past, a negligence has appeared in many of the children, as to the hour of coming to school, very different from their former praiseworthy attention. A great number have in consequence been sent home without certificates (see school accounts for the last month.) Whenever there is a reasonable excuse for being late, your Pastor is ready to allow it, and therefore, *during the harvest time*, the class lists will not be called over till nine o'clock, at

none will be marked late before that time, although the school will begin as usual, at a quarter before nine. This will afford an opportunity of remarking those amongst the children and parents who are willing to make an effort for good on the Lord's day, even though they may happen to require more bodily rest than usual. So much concerning the children.

With respect to the mode of guarding against the dangers of the harvest to your own souls, one great rule would be enough, if it were always attended to. That rule is, go forth to the harvest field PRAYING that God's Spirit would go with you—continue in your work secretly PRAYING that the same Spirit may keep you—and when you hear or see evil persons engaged in evil words or works, let it be an occasion for lifting up your heart secretly to Him “to whom all hearts are open,” that you may be kept from the evil infection of sin. To any one who keeps this rule, the harvest would turn out to be a means of grace instead of a danger of evil. To help you in doing this, you are recommended to use the following prayers during harvest time. The first you can read every day before you go forth to your work; the second is very short indeed, that you may get it by heart, and repeat it in your heart many times in the course of every day.

#### FIRST PRAYER

*To be used during harvest time in the morning before going to work.*

OH good and merciful God, I thank Thee for the rest of the past night, and for the strength with which I arise this morning. Give me continued strength every hour of this day, that I may be able to do my work in this harvest. Keep me sensible that I depend entirely upon Thy



goodness, and let me not foolishly try to turn away that goodness from me by giving way to sinful thoughts, words, or works. Let me not encourage others in evil; and keep me from following the way of evil company. Give me grace to lift up my heart to Thee many times in prayer, and answer my prayers by giving me more and more the Holy Spirit, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

## SECOND PRAYER

*To be used oftentimes in the course of the day.*

Thou God seest me. Give me the Holy Spirit; and keep me from sin, for Christ's sake. Amen.

## XLI.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

11 Sept. 1836.

THE children of the National School would have been called together again this week, but that the showery weather seems to have delayed the gathering in of the barley harvest, so as to leave still something for them to do. It has been found by experience, that what may be called a bad beginning amongst the children, very much hinders their progress for a long time; while, on the contrary, by a GOOD BEGINNING, a great many of those difficulties which are found in teaching all children, are very much lessened. If only a few children of different classes come after the holidays at first, they cannot be placed according to their ability; and bad

habits, as regards their learning, are formed. It therefore seems better to put off the opening of the school until Monday week, the 19th of September, at which time all the parents are exhorted to send their children at once. It is a very bad plan for any parents to keep their children back a little longer than the time allowed for holidays : besides the loss of so much time, which at their age is very precious, children that are thus kept back, find it a great deal more troublesome to themselves to fall into the usual habits of the school ; and it takes a long time for them to get up into the same place in the class, at which they might have arrived, if they had all begun together.

## XLII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

13 Nov. 1836.

THE time is arrived for the SCHOOL TICKET SALE, which will take place on Thursday in this week. It will be necessary to recall to your minds the plan of this sale, and the promise which was made last year concerning it ; that you may know what to expect, and that none of you may have reason to be disappointed. You are all very well acquainted with the rules by which the parents' encouragement tickets have been distributed, and many of you have received a considerable number of them. These tickets will be exchanged at the sale for useful articles which have been collected in the course of the year.

The Rector has expended a certain fixed sum of money in purchasing some of the articles. This was all he promised to do ; and if no one besides had given any thing

else, the articles so purchased would have been divided according to the number of the tickets which have been given out. They would have gone very little way, as more than 14,000 tickets have been distributed amongst seventy-one parents; and each parent would therefore have received but a very small proportion. But the Rector further promised to apply to his friends, and to ask them also to supply some articles towards the sale. He has performed his promise, and a great many kind friends have sent different articles, so that a very fair proportion of things will fall to the share of each parent, according to the tickets they possess.

The articles will be all arranged in the School-rooms, and each article will be marked with the number of tickets for which it will be given. It must be distinctly remembered that the number of tickets marked upon each article is not at all according to the value of the article if it were bought at a shop. The marking of the tickets upon the articles will be regulated by considering first, how many tickets all the parents have got; and then, how many articles are collected together to give in exchange for them. If the articles happen to be many, then the number of tickets marked upon each will be few. If, on the contrary, there are but few articles contributed, then each article will be marked to be given for a greater number of tickets. This must be well understood; because the way in which the articles are marked this year, will be no rule by which to know how they may be marked another year. If only half as many things happen to be contributed by friends, and yet the same number of tickets have been distributed amongst the parents, then the same kind of articles which are given this year for 100 tickets, will next year require 200. But if, on the contrary, double the number of things should be sent by kind friends, that which is now given for

100 tickets will then be given for 50. The real value of the things therefore has nothing to do with the tickets marked upon each.

The children must have the opportunity of choosing for themselves the articles for the tickets they have earned. For this purpose the children's ticket sale will take place first. It will begin at eleven o'clock on Thursday morning, when the children will be admitted to the Infants' School-room, where they will find as many articles laid out, as will be exchanged for all the tickets they have got altogether. They may take their choice; and their parents may, if they like, attend with them. The things will just suit the number of tickets; so that those who choose last must take what is left, whatever it may be, as nothing will be given for tickets after the sale. As soon as the children have taken all their things, the parents will be admitted to the National School-room, where the articles for them will be laid out. These articles will also be just suited to the number of tickets which all the parents have got; so that the same thing may be said about the parents' sale as about the children's—those that are served last must take what is left, whatever it may be, as nothing will be given for their tickets after the sale. The parents and the children must bring the tickets which they have now got, and give them at the door. These will be exchanged for a number of others, of the value of ten, twenty, fifty, eighty, a hundred, &c., making up the value of each. This will prevent trouble, and mistakes in counting, during the sale, as, if a mother wants any thing marked 100 tickets, she has only to give a ticket of that value, without any calculating: and so also of any other mark. The number marked can in no case be changed; and no one must expect to get more articles than for the tickets they bring. It is plain that this rule must be strictly kept; for, there are only articles

enough for the tickets which have been distributed; and if any one gets more than her number, some one else must receive less, which would be unjust. The tickets which have been distributed since the last Collection day in September, are not to be included in this ticket sale, but to be kept for the next.

The number of children who have earned tickets in the course of the last year, is 109; and the number of tickets they have earned is eight thousand and sixty-eight.

23 children have earned more than 100 tickets.

6 ..... between 80 and 100 ..

18 ..... between 60 and 80 ..

24 ..... between 40 and 60 ..

23 ..... between 20 and 40 ..

15 ..... less than 20 ..

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109

According to the promise made last year, ten tickets have been given to the parents for every hundred tickets earned by any child. This is to encourage the parents in leading the children to be attentive and diligent.

The number of families who have received parents' encouragement tickets is seventy-one; and the number of tickets distributed amongst them is fourteen thousand four hundred and thirty-four.

1 Family has received upwards of 500 tickets.

6 .....from 400 to 500 ..

12 .....300 to 400 ..

15 .....200 to 300 ..

14 .....100 to 200 ..

14 ..... 50 to 100 ..

9 ..... under 50 ..

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71

The amount of the children's and the parents' tickets together is twenty-two thousand four hundred and two.

## XLIII.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

24 Sept. 1837.

THE National and Infants' Schools have begun their regular work again, last week. The return of the children after the harvest holidays is always considered as the beginning of the year's instruction with them; and all the arrangements connected with the schools are closed for the year, on the week before this opening. The parents' encouragement tickets have been collected, and the children's also; except the tickets of those children who have this day to repeat their verses, for the purpose of increasing the number. This will prevent an account being given to-day, of the children's tickets; and; concerning them, it can only now be said, that the number will certainly be less than last year.

As to the parents' encouragement tickets, an account can now be given you; and it is very important that it should be well understood by all the fathers and mothers in the parish. It is one advantage in sending these tickets that, in adding up the numbers at the end of the year, we can come at a sure knowledge of the attention which the parents have given to the instruction of their children, generally in the parish. Let us see what we learn on this point from the present collection of the tickets.

At first sight, the account looks well; but the first sight is not always the truest; and so it turns out in this case. The whole number of parents' tickets this year, is 14,507: this is seventy-three more than last year. This seems to shew that the parents have taken care to send their children to



school more regularly and continually this year than they did last year. Now, the fact is, that for the last five or six months, there has been more neglect in this matter, than for a long time before.

A little examination about the tickets will prove this; while, in the school itself, it is too plain to be mistaken. The tickets are collected half yearly. They were first sent to the parents this time two years. The first half year of 1836 there were 6031 tickets—the second half year there were 8403.—This was as it should be; it shewed improvement. The first half of the present year there were 8082 tickets:—this was less by 321 than the half year before it: and now, at the end of the fourth half year, there are only 6425—this is 1657 less than the previous half year, and 1978 less than the half year before that. What does this shew? It is very plain that, in spite of all the warning and exhortation and encouragement that is given them, many parents will not attend as they ought, to the best interests of their children. There are too many children who are disobedient to their parents; but there are also unhappily too many parents who neglect their duty to their children.

It is sad to find this; and your Pastor calls upon every neglectful parent to remember, that it is a great sin to waste the precious days of the early life of their children. “In the morning” they are commanded to “sow the seed;” and they must not be surprised, should they neglect to sow in the sowing season, that they afterwards reap nothing but thistles and weeds. Or, to speak more plainly, if they neglect the opportunity of getting their children taught the Word of God, and brought into submission to authority, they must lay it to their own account, when they afterwards have the misery of finding them grow up wicked, ignorant, and unruly, with all the dreadful consequence here, and hereafter.

The whole number of tickets this year is divided in the following manner, as compared with last year.

| LAST YEAR.                   | TICKETS.   | THIS YEAR. |
|------------------------------|------------|------------|
| 1 Family received upwards of | 500        | 3 Families |
| 6 .....                      | 400 to 500 | 9          |
| 12 .....                     | 300 to 400 | 8          |
| 15 .....                     | 200 to 300 | 14         |
| 14 .....                     | 100 to 200 | 13         |
| 14 .....                     | 50 to 100  | 5          |
| 9 .....                      | under..... | 50         |
| 71                           |            | 63         |

Some further examination makes the matter appear worse and worse. Certificates of good conduct have been given, during the past twelve months, to the children who have attended at the Sunday School regularly, and have had no mark of any kind against them. Of course they are not given to absent children; and have always been kept back from those children who have attended, but who behaved ill in any way, in church or in school. These certificates have been collected with the parents' tickets, and their number will serve to shew the true state of the school, as well as its progress. In the first half of the year, 1772 of these certificates which had been given to the children, were brought by the parents! in the last half-year there were only 1630, which is 142 less. This shews that many more children must have been kept from the Sunday school, or have behaved ill while there, since last Easter than in the previous half-year.—How does this happen? The parents who have been neglectful of this important duty must answer that question. They will have to answer it to God, the Almighty Father, who has given their children in charge to them to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Their Pastor earnestly entreats them to consider well in their consciences what answer they will give: while he

urges them to redeem the time in this matter, because the days are especially evil upon this very point; as any person, who notices the bold and hardened ungodliness of many of the young lads and girls of the parish, cannot fail to observe.

Let all the parents remember, that, to help their consciences in this work, an exact account will be kept, as before; and that it will (if God permit) be laid before them next Michaelmas. God grant that it may shew a great improvement in the parish, in this respect.

Due notice will be given of the day of the ticket sale, which will be conducted according to the same rules as that last year. All persons will do well to read attentively the word sent to them last year, on the 13th Nov. with Calendar No, 51.

#### XLIV.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

1 Oct. 1837.

THE tickets earned by the children during the past year, have now been all collected; and it appears that there are 1112 less than the number earned by the children last year. The number last year was 8868—that for this year is 6956. There are several reasons which may have produced this result; and which, upon the whole, make it more satisfactory than it appears to be. And therefore your Pastor will only urge all the parents to encourage their children to be as attentive at home as possible in learning extra lessons.

The number of children who have earned tickets in the year is 114; and a comparison between last year and the present, is by no means unsatisfactory.

| LAST YEAR.                         | TICKETS. | THIS YEAR. |
|------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| 23 children earned more than 100   |          | 18         |
| 6     between           80 and 100 |          | 5          |
| 18 .....                           | 60 .. 80 | 18         |
| 24 .....                           | 40 .. 60 | 22         |
| 23 .....                           | 20 .. 40 | 29         |
| 15 ....less than.. .....           | 20       | 22         |
| <hr/> 109                          |          | <hr/> 114  |

According to the rules, 10 tickets will be given to the parents for every 100 tickets gained by a child. This is to encourage the parents in leading the children to be attentive and obedient.

The whole number of tickets to be provided for at the ticket sale will be as follows—

|                             |         |             |
|-----------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Parents' Tickets            | - - - - | 14507       |
| Added for children who have | } - -   | 250         |
| earned above 100            |         |             |
|                             |         | <hr/> 14757 |
| Children's Tickets          | - - - - | 6956        |
|                             | Total   | <hr/> 21713 |

Which is just 689 less than last year.

Your Pastor has for a long time regretted that there has been so little use made of the books in the Village Library. There are however several plain reasons for this. For instance, when the books first began to be lent, nearly nine years ago, they were taken by a great many of the people, and very much read. It appears, by the list which has been kept, that almost all the books have been read through by many people; and it is no wonder, therefore, that these same books are no longer wanted: they have accordingly been laid aside. But your Pastor has been anxious to provide other

books, so that those persons in the parish who are disposed to occupy some spare time in improving themselves by reading, may have the opportunity of doing so. He has accordingly procured a number of books which are entirely new, and they are placed at the Rector's Room at Sutton. Any persons in the parish who desire to make use of these books are at liberty to do so, providing they use them with care, and return them in proper order, when they have read them. Persons desirous of borrowing any of these books, or of changing them after they have read them, may attend at the Rector's Room half an hour before the cottage reading; that is, at half-past one o'clock on the afternoons on which the cottage reading is held. Some person shall always attend to give out the books that are wanted.

## XLV.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

26 Nov. 1837.

THERE is no subject which ought to interest a minister of Christ more than the care of teaching the little children of his parishioners from the earliest age: nor is there any thing about which he ought to be more diligent in trying to make the parents do their duty. It depends upon the beginning, under God, how the children turn out in the end: and as evil begins to shew itself in their hearts while they are even babes, so it is necessary that we should make a beginning of good there, at the same age; for this reason a well-conducted Infants' School is one of the greatest blessings that a parish can have. Not a school where the children are taught how to read only; that is a matter which comes

afterwards. The object of a school should be to lay an early foundation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ; by which the children, when they grow up, may be able to live as Christians—to die as Christians—and to go to heaven Christians. A great deal has been said upon this subject by your Pastor already; and he purposes to say still more, after we have begun our next year, at Advent: but *saying* is not enough, there must be *doing* also. No more will *hearing* what is said to be enough, there must be *doing* by the hearers also, or else no good will come of it. Your Pastor therefore puts off further *saying* for the present; and intends to begin the new Advent with a new *doing*.

It is found that, during the winter time, there is a great deal of difficulty in sending *little* children with REGULARITY, through the bad weather, from Sutton to Wonston. To send them without regularity undoes almost all the good that is done by occasionally attending a school: and many dear little children at Sutton have lost, in the winter time, nearly all the advantage they gained in the summer. There are upwards of fifty children living at Sutton, who ought to be regularly attending the Infants' School; being between the ages of two years and six. The fact that children are sent to work at a very early age makes it the more important that they should be well attended to in their infancy; and, therefore, your Pastor is determined to take every excuse away from the parents of those children who live at Sutton, by establishing an Infants' School there, in connexion with that at Wonston. Some further particulars of this school will be hereafter explained; but your Pastor is desirous of losing no time, and therefore, as the Winter weather is coming on, THE SUTTON INFANTS' SCHOOL will be opened on Monday in Advent week, the 4th of December next. All the children at Sutton, between the ages of two and six, should be sent to this school at once. It would



be as well that those parents who intend to send their children should mention it to Mr. Shayler, in the course of this week, if they conveniently can. He will give any information that parents may wish; but the rules, and further particulars will be given to the parish afterwards.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may send his blessing upon this endeavour to bring the little children of the parish to Christ Jesus. (Mark x. 14.)

## XLVI.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

*22 April, 1838.*

THE parents' Encouragement Tickets for the last half-year have been collected; and since last Michaelmas they amount to 9141, which is 738 more than the number for the winter half of last year. Upon examining the certificates of good conduct which have been given during the half year, it appears that their number has been just 1900, which is 128 more than were collected this time last year. This is so far well; but things are not altogether as they should be in this respect. If that number be divided equally amongst the Sundays which have passed since the previous collection day, it will only be seventy-three certificates each Sunday, though the number of children who ought to attend the Sunday School is more than 100. Many are kept away *part* of the Lord's day, who of course therefore get no certificate. Let those parents who keep them at home consider seriously how much good they are hindering their children from getting, both by instruction, and also by forming early habits of proper behaviour on the Sabbath.

The object of sending these certificates is to enable the parents to work with their minister in the education of their children. When the parents do not work with the minister, very little good can be expected from the best teaching at school. If therefore the parent does not think of asking the child for the certificate on the Sunday evening, or if the child be treated in the same manner, whether the certificate be brought home or not, what can be the result but disobedience, neglect, idleness, and sin. Your Pastor is anxious to call upon the parents to do the duty which God requires of them. On the last Sunday in every month, those children who have had no mark against them on the previous Sundays, usually get a little loaf for their suppers. Whenever a child does not take this home, the parent will remember the Sunday on which no certificate was brought, and this will account for no little loaf coming when the others had theirs. But if it should happen that a child has been twice marked in the same month for bad conduct in church, or for idleness in not learning the short regular lesson, a notice will in future be sent to the parent on the Monday following. Your Pastor will do this, not only that he may not be responsible for allowing the child to go on in evil, but also to point out to the parents their duty, in the hope that God may give them grace to do it, by mildly, yet firmly correcting their children.

The number of tickets given in exchange for the 1900 certificates, has been 475, making the whole number 9616. The tickets earned by the children in the last half year, by extra lessons, and for good conduct, amount to 3782; which, added to the parent's tickets, make 13,398.

## XLVII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

25 Nov. 1938.

THE ticket sale, which has been a little delayed this year, will take place on Thursday (the 6th December) in the next week; and in preparation for it, your Pastor sends you now such an account of the particulars concerning the number of tickets as has been given on the former years. He has not delayed this account because the day of the sale was put off, but because it has been the subject of his serious thoughts and prayers for a considerable time, and he has been desirous of taking the occasion of sending the account, to lay the whole subject of the education of the children in the parish fully before the people, and especially before the parents. It is his intention to do so in the Word which he purposes to send round at Advent (next Sunday); and, as much that will then be said will require very serious consideration rightly to understand and duly to apply it, your Pastor thinks it best to give the account now, in all its particulars, for you to think over; so that you may be the better able to see the necessity for those rules which he will afterwards speak of, and which it is intended to act upon in the forthcoming year: and may God give you all grace rightly to consider the subject, and rightly to practice that which may be the duty of each.

The general account of the tickets for the last year is as follows:—

The number of Parents' Encouragement Tickets which have been given is 17,101.

Of these, 881 have been in exchange for 3524 certificates of proper conduct in the children.

Besides these, 260 additional tickets have (according to the rule) been given to the parents of those children who have earned more than 100 tickets :—making 17,361.

But from this number, no less than 593 tickets have (according also to the rule) been kept back from parents who have allowed their children to be irregular at the Sunday School; and especially have not sent them in the afternoon of a Sunday when they have been marked for correction in the morning; or have withheld them for some Sundays afterwards. As an important part of the plan by which the tickets are given at all is to prevent such ill-judged conduct on the part of the parents, it is absolutely necessary to keep the rule strictly; and this is one of the subjects upon which your Pastor is very anxious to point out their duty to all the parents in the parish. This reduces the total number of Parents' Encouragement Tickets, for this year, to 16,768, which have been distributed amongst sixty-three families.

With respect to the children's tickets, only eighty-one children have earned tickets at all; and twenty-one of them have gained more than 100 each. The number of tickets they have received for the whole year, is 6425; which, added to the Parents' Encouragement Tickets, makes the whole number this year to be 23,193.

The Ticket Sale will be conducted exactly in the same manner as last year; and it will not therefore be necessary to repeat the instructions concerning it, which were fully explained last year, in the "Word" No. 32, sent round on the 13th November, 1837. The only difference will be, that the hour will be altered to make it more convenient to the people. The children will be admitted into the school-room, to choose what they like for their tickets, at half-past one o'clock; and the parents will be admitted shortly after two o'clock;

In preparation for the "Word" upon the subject of education which your Pastor purposes to send you, the following information is given you, to shew a comparison between the present, and the two last years, during which the arrangement of the tickets has been carried on.

As to the Children who have earned Tickets.

|                                      | IN THE YEARS |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|
|                                      | 1836.        | 1837. | 1838. |
| Number who have earned more than 100 | 23           | 18    | 21    |
| between 80 and 100                   | 6            | 5     | 9     |
| ,, 60 ,, 80                          | 18           | 18    | 17    |
| ,, 40 ,, 60                          | 24           | 22    | 18    |
| ,, 20 ,, 40                          | 23           | 29    | 8     |
| less than 20                         | 15           | 22    | 8     |
| Totals                               | 109          | 114   | 81    |

As to the Families who have received the Parents' Encouragement Tickets.

|                                                             | IN THE YEARS |       |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|
|                                                             | 1836.        | 1837. | 1838. |
| Number of Families who have received upwards of 500 Tickets | 1            | 3     | 7     |
| from 400 to 500                                             | 6            | 9     | 8     |
| ,, 300 ,, 400                                               | 12           | 8     | 8     |
| ,, 200 ,, 300                                               | 15           | 14    | 9     |
| ,, 100 ,, 200                                               | 14           | 15    | 17    |
| ,, 50 ,, 100                                                | 14           | 5     | 7     |
| under 50                                                    | 9            | 11    | 7     |
| Totals                                                      | 71           | 63    | 63    |

Besides this, the following GENERAL COMPARATIVE STATEMENT will afford all the other information that is necessary. Let those who are parents consider it well; and ask themselves what portion they have received of the advantages afforded, compared with that which they ought to have received, if they had done all that they ought to have done to put their children in the way of receiving, in their earliest years, the advantages of a Christian education, which is placed within their power.

|                                                                                                            | 1836.<br>1st half | 1836.<br>2nd half | 1837.<br>1st half | 1837.<br>2nd half | 1838.<br>1st half | 1838.<br>2nd half |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Certificates given for Children's proper conduct.....                                                      |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |                   |
| Together                                                                                                   |                   |                   | 1772              | 1630              | 1900              | 1624              |
| Tickets given for them.....                                                                                |                   |                   | 3402              |                   | 3524              |                   |
| Parents' Encouragement Tickets .....                                                                       | 6031              | 8403              | 443               | 408               | 475               | 406               |
| All together                                                                                               | 14434             |                   | 7639              | 6017              | 9141              | 7079              |
| Tickets earned by Children .....                                                                           | 4380              | 3588              | 14507             |                   | 17101             |                   |
| Together                                                                                                   | 7968              |                   | 4380              | 2826              | 3782              | 2643              |
| Tickets given to both                                                                                      | 10411             | 11991             | 7206              |                   | 6425              |                   |
| TOTAL                                                                                                      | 22402             |                   | 12462             | 9251              | 13398             | 10128             |
| Tickets to Parents for Children who earned above 100                                                       | 350               |                   | 21713             |                   | 23526             |                   |
|                                                                                                            |                   |                   | 250               |                   | 260               |                   |
| Deduct from Parents who sent their Children irregularly to Sunday School, especially after correction... } | 22752             |                   | 21963             |                   | 23786             |                   |
|                                                                                                            |                   |                   |                   |                   | 593               |                   |
|                                                                                                            |                   |                   |                   |                   | 23193             |                   |
| Number of Children who earned tickets                                                                      | 109               |                   | 114               |                   | 81                |                   |
| Children who earned above 100 tickets                                                                      | 23                |                   | 18                |                   | 21                |                   |
| Families to whom tickets sent...                                                                           | 71                |                   | 63                |                   | 63                |                   |



## XLVIII.

## THE PASTOR'S ADVENT ADDRESS TO HIS FLOCK.

(SECOND PART).

16 Dec. 1838.

YOUR Pastor has judged it proper to bring the subject of the education of your children before you, in a separate portion of the Advent Address; and he requests, that very particular attention may be given to what he now writes to you. May God give his blessing with it.

Every paragraph in this address is numbered, for the purpose of more easily referring to each particular part of the subject, upon future occasions.

1. Your Pastor has very often called your attention to the great importance of taking care that the children have the grounds of education laid in their earliest years. Upon the present occasion, he does not intend to say more upon the general subject, than to refer to the frequent warnings he has given (so many of which are to be found in the various "Words" which have been sent round the parish) as he principally wishes now to state, as clearly and as shortly as possible, all the information necessary to enable every parent in the parish to profit by all the helps which are offered to them, for the instruction of their children. Upon the general subject, therefore, it will only be necessary to put you in mind of the following plain truths:—

2. If children are not taught, and brought into habits of discipline and order, while they are very young, they cannot afterwards learn, or break their bad habits, without greater trouble than is ever likely to be taken with them, either by themselves or others, when they grow up.

3. Poor people's children must be sent to work at so early

an age, that, if the greatest regularity and discipline be not enforced while they *do* go to school, they will learn nothing well enough to prevent them from forgetting it in their first years of work ; so that *irregular* schooling is almost as bad as no schooling at all.

4. All the instruction and discipline taught to the children at school will never have the desired effect, unless the parents agree with the minister and the schoolmaster, and make the children feel that they are all working together. If the parent take part with the child when it is chastened at school, no good can be the consequence.

5. Whatever is taught to a child should lead, in some way or other, to the knowledge of Christ and religious duty. If a child be not taught this, no other knowledge will ever do him real good, and may do him much harm.

6. No parents have a right to injure their children, by keeping from them that upon which their welfare, both in this world and in the next, principally depends. To do this would be a great sin, for which the parents would have to answer before God.

7. It is upon these **FOUR PLAIN TRUTHS** that your Pastor desires you to act, and to act himself ; and taking these for granted, he will proceed to state the opportunities which are afforded in the parish for the instruction of the children.

8. All children above the age of two years are admitted into the Infants' School, which will in future be kept entirely at Sutton. The parents of the few children at Wonston, who are too young to be received into the National School, must have the inconvenience of sending them to Sutton, where the greater number of infants live ; this should be considered as the less hardship, because for many years, they have had the advantage of the Infants' School being at Wonston, when the Sutton parents had the greater distance to send

them. Thursdays and Saturdays are half-holidays at the Infants' School.

9. All children above age for the Infants' School are admitted into the National School at Wonston. Children who live at Wonston will be received there, at as early an age as possible, to prevent the inconvenience of sending them to Sutton. There is no schooling on Saturdays.

10. All children of proper age are required to attend the Sunday School; and to continue in it as long as possible after they are taken from the National School to go to work.

11. The money to be paid for the schooling of each child at the Infants' School and National School is twopence a week. If more than two children are sent from the same family, the third, and every other child, pays only one penny. The Sunday School is entirely free.

12. Your Pastor expects that *every parent in the parish* will avail themselves of these advantages for their children. He will explain presently, how he intends to be guided, in doing what he can to assist those who are parents, by the way in which they do what they can to assist their children. He is well aware that some of you, having large families, are in circumstances which make these weekly payments difficult. The money thus paid is a very small part of the actual expence of educating the children, and is the least amount that the parents can be required to contribute. But there are several means of still further assisting those, who are really unable to pay for their children's schooling.

13. There are *twenty freedoms* for children in the two schools. Seven of these will be put at the disposal of the different ladies who are kind enough to be District Visitors for the Friendly Help Society—one for each District. The remaining thirteen your Pastor will endeavour to give to such as are most in want of assistance.

14. Besides this, there are *ten half freedoms* for children in

the two schools; the children that have them are to pay only one penny a week; or they will make the third or fourth child in a family entirely free.

15. If any child, who has a freedom, or a half-freedom, is absent for four weeks together, for any reason whatsoever (except sickness, and when sick for eight weeks together,) the freedom will be forfeited.

16. As this is the greatest number of freedoms which can be allowed from the school fund, a further opportunity is afforded for obtaining assistance through subscriptions. Persons who may be kindly disposed to assist the poor may subscribe to the school fund; and, for every subscription of seven shillings a year, the subscriber shall be entitled to a freedom for one child; and a half-freedom for every subscription of three shillings and sixpence a year.

17. There is a charity fund, which was formerly bequeathed to the parish, and which is now paid to a private schoolmistress, for the education of seventeen children, who are named by the descendant of the donor. It is to be clearly understood by all the parents, that a nomination to this charity will be admitted as a reason for not sending any child to the Infants' or National School, provided the child attends the Sunday School. This, however, will not be considered as a reason for keeping any other child in the same family away from the Infants' or National School.

18. All the girls in the school (who are old enough) are carefully taught to work, during the whole of the afternoons; and, still further to assist the parents, such girls as have advanced in needle-work so far as to be able to make things fit for sale shall always, in future, be supplied with work at school; for which they shall be paid at a fixed rate, according to the goodness of their work. The girls have the choice of bringing work from their homes, if their parents wish them; for which, of course, they will not be paid.

19. During the harvest time, the parents may have the advantage of sending their young children to the Infants' School at any hour in the morning, however early, at which they go into the field. Such parents must leave sufficient food for the children, who will be taken care of until they are called for again, at any time in the evening.

20. Your Pastor takes every parent in the parish to record that, if any one of their children be lost hereafter for want of early instruction, it is the parent who will be without excuse. But having done all in his power to afford them the necessary means of bringing up their children in the way they should go, he desires you all clearly to understand, that, with respect to those who have children, it is his intention to apply the assistance which, through the Providence of God, he may be able to afford, in proportion as they shew themselves willing to do the duty which God has placed upon them, and to take advantage of the means thus within their reach. Those who send their children to school regularly, and, in their conduct, work with the school discipline, may expect that, what assistance can be afforded them, shall be given freely. On the other hand, those who keep their children away from school, or send them irregularly, or hinder at home what is done for their good at school, must not expect the same advantages as the others may receive. Your Pastor considers this line of conduct to be a sacred duty which he owes to the little children of his flock, who are unable to judge or act for themselves; and he wishes his intentions to be known amongst you all, as they will be strictly acted upon. Any parents who may be the losers in worldly advantages, will have nobody to thank but themselves.

21. It will be best not to leave this subject in any uncertainty; and therefore your Pastor will proceed to state the exact rules upon which he means to act in future in this respect. There are two ways of making parents feel the

benefit of doing their duty to their children. One is, by *encouraging* those who really do that duty; and the other is by *discouraging* those who neglect it: both these ways shall be tried.

22. First, as to *encouragement*. The Parents' Encouragement Tickets shall be sent to them regularly as usual; and by this means, those who have sent their Children most frequently, and assisted the school discipline most effectively, will be able to get the largest share of the things collected every year for the Ticket Sale. But the rules respecting their tickets will be most strictly kept. These rules shall be sent to you again, clearly put down; and you will see that any absence from the Sunday School (except for sickness) will lessen the number by forfeits; and especially that, for any interference with school punishment, or encouraging the children in that which is forbidden at school, the parent will lose most of the advantage obtained by sending the children. The Certificates of good conduct given to the children are intended to enable the parent to know when to encourage, and when to reprove. Great care should be taken in asking always for the certificate on Sunday evening, as no child is ever sent home without one, unless there is something to reprove. These certificates are made the means of assisting the parents, by increasing their tickets for the sale in a certain proportion. The rules concerning these certificates will be found with those for the ticket sale.

23. Another encouragement is afforded to both parents and children, by the gift of a little loaf of bread to each child, to take home for supper on the last Sunday in every month. This is given instead of the feast which used formerly to be given to the children once every year. To many a parent it must be a greater help for the children to bring home such a portion every month, than that they should have a meal once a year. But this gift of bread is not given to any child,



unless he has attended every Sunday in the month, and passed them all without any mark against his name. This is one means of assisting those parents who are careful to send their children regularly, and to help on at home the good they get at school.

24. All persons who send their children to the Infants' and National Schools have the privilege of paying into the Penny club for each child: if the child has attended regularly all the year, the amount is doubled at the end of it; and laid out in clothes at the parent's choice. But if the attendance has not been regular, a penny is added for those weeks only, in which the child has actually been at school. Let it be remembered that these rules will be strictly kept.

25. Secondly; as to the *discouragement* with which negligent parents will be treated. There are several ways by which your Pastor has regularly endeavoured to assist you every year: such as the Clothing and Fuel funds, and the glebe gardens. These he hopes to be able to continue. But as the help thus afforded is entirely a free gift, it is not only plain that it is at his *choice* to give it in what manner he thinks best; but also that it is his *duty* to give it in such a manner as will most advance the glory of God amongst you and your children. Accordingly while he offers the benefit generally, he has determined that, in future, no persons who are parents, and who do not send their children to school, shall be allowed to pay into either the Clothing or Fuel funds, or to have a glebe garden; and those parents who *do* send their children to school, shall receive the benefit of the two funds, only according to their regularity. For this purpose the proper attendance at the Sunday School shall be taken as a guide; and the addition shall be made to the parents' payments, in exact proportion to the number of Sundays that the children have attended. The rules of these funds will be also sent to you, and you are warned that they will be strictly kept.

There is yet much to be said upon this important subject,

upon which the future welfare of the whole parish depends both in this life and in the next. What has now been said will however be enough for you to consider at one time; and with God's blessing, your Pastor hopes to continue this address next week.

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26. In this Address, your Pastor has already endeavoured to shew you in what manner he intends (with God's help) to do his duty towards the little children, whom God has placed under his spiritual care. He will now proceed to explain to you some particulars, which may help to shew parents what mistakes some of them make, in hindering their children for every trifling cause from taking advantage of the instruction offered them. Some parents send their children to school, and keep their names upon the lists of the scholars, by letting them attend now and then; but for every little reason, and sometimes for no reason at all, they keep them at home; and thus break up the habits of learning and of discipline, which are of much more importance to the child than the getting by heart of a lesson now and then. The great evils of irregularity have been already referred to, in paragraphs numbers 2, 3, and 4. There are two ways in which some parents have brought upon their children these great evils. One is, by keeping them away from school from time to time without making any excuse for their conduct, because the *real reasons* are not such as they can venture to bring forward as excuses: and the other way is, by keeping them away for such causes as they *are* able to state in excuse. We will consider these two ways separately.

27. First; as to the *private* reasons of parents for allowing their children to be irregular, which however they do not mention as excuses. These most commonly happen with parents who spoil their children (as it is called), by indulging them in their own foolish ways; (a sin which is sure to bring

great trouble upon the parents when their children grow up, and to make the children afterwards dislike instead of love them.) The most common mistake of this kind is, when the parents allow a child to remain at home on Sunday *because the regular lesson has not been learnt*. The regular lesson is always fixed for each class, according to their capacity; and it is so short as to be less than they can learn, in order to enable them, if they are willing, to earn tickets by learning extra lessons. It is the parents' part to see that the children occupy themselves at home in learning this regular lesson, in the first place; and those who neglect their part during the week, are just the persons who do not mind injuring their children by letting them idle away the Sabbath, and neglect the discipline of the school. Any parents, who allow this excuse to keep a child from the Sunday School, will be sinfully neglecting their duty, and must have no encouragement.

28. A greater degree of this sinful neglect is very often shewn, when a child has been sent to school on Sunday morning, but has not been able to say the regular lesson, or has been marked for some misconduct. In dismissing the school on that afternoon, the certificate of good conduct (see paragraph 22) would be refused to such a child, whose name would be called over for that purpose. It sometimes happens that a child thus marked is *kept away* by the parent; or, what is quite as bad, is *allowed* to remain from school that afternoon. When a child who has been thus encouraged in disobedience and self-will grows a little older, and begins to shew the effects of his disobedience to his parents, and self-will against them; in the midst of their misery at finding their rebellious child is grown beyond their power, let them remember that they are reaping the fruit of their own folly: and it is only their old sin which "will find them out." (Num. xxxii. 23.) The rules of the school are so formed as to give the parents some warning concerning this sinful mistake.

29. Some soft-hearted parents (who think they are shewing their kindness to their children by letting them have amusement whenever they wish it, and who fancy it is cruel to cross them when they cry) let them go to school only just when they like, and keep away when they like. Children in this unhappy condition never learn anything so as to be of any use to them: one week at school and another at home, only makes them unsettled in every thing; every diligent child gets before them, and they grow up ignorant and self-willed. The kind-heartedness of such parents will not get them any encouragement from the rules, which are made so as to discourage them as much as possible.

30. The worst of all the bad reasons for which children are hindered is that which influences the parents who are angry when they find that their children have been punished at school for some fault. Sometimes when a child carries home a complaint, the parent listens to the story, without considering how different it may turn out to be from the true state of the case. Temper rises—angry feelings are shewn before the child—and he is kept from school. Some fathers and mothers really seem to be so foolish as to fancy that they are doing a favour by sending their children to school, and doing a hurt by keeping them away. It would be hardly possible to believe this, if things did not actually happen which make it likely, and shew how difficult it is to teach some people that in such a case they can only favour or hurt their own children; for, if it were not that these children have precious souls, or that God has put it into the hearts of Christians to love their souls, and desire to save them by leading them to Christ, who would take all the trouble of teaching them day by day, and try to break all their bad habits, and to form good ones in them? By the rules of the schools, whenever it may happen that parents keep their children away after punishment, or shew before them any

resistance to the discipline which is necessary at school, the Encouragement Tickets will be forfeited in proportion to the offence. It must be remembered that your Pastor is at all times ready to listen to every complaint which a parent may desire to make; and that he promises, upon proper enquiry, to take care that in no case shall anything be done unjustly or improperly to any child. Under this promise, the parents must tell children who have been punished, that they certainly have deserved the chastisement; and must treat them accordingly: always having the means of satisfying themselves, by applying in a proper manner to the schoolmaster, or to the minister. All these four reasons, which, without being acknowledged or declared, nevertheless influence some fathers and mothers in their conduct about their children, are *no excuses*; but, on the contrary, to act upon them would be sinful in the parents, and ruinous to the children.

31. The other way in which parents injure their children by irregularity in attendance at school is, when they make various excuses to themselves for not taking full advantage of the instruction offered them; which excuses they think are good ones, and state them openly. Some of these excuses are more reasonable than others; but the best of them may be often taken out of the way by a little care and arrangement. Some are quite unreasonable. We will consider all the excuses that are generally made.

32. The first excuse that we will consider is that which is made by very poor persons, who say that they cannot afford the expense. This *seems* a very strong reason for not sending children to school; but, upon looking into the matter, it will appear that no person in this parish ought ever to bring such an excuse. In the first place, this would be no excuse for keeping a child from the Sunday School, which is free; and secondly, those who are really in want more than others are just the persons to whom the freedoms and half-freedoms

will be given. (see paragraphs 13, 14, and 17) But suppose as hard a case as can possibly be found. Suppose a poor man having to send three or four children, and to pay for them all, which would be five-pence or six-pence a week. If these children *are sent regularly to school* they may all have the benefit of the Penny Club (see paragraph 24): the parents might pay into both Clothing and Fuel Funds, and may also have a glebe garden if there be one vacant (see paragraph 25). Besides these advantages the share of the things put into the ticket sale for so large a family, (especially if the children are attentive to their learning) would be very considerable (see paragraph 22). Added to this, the girls might earn enough by their work in school-time to pay for their schooling (see paragraph 18); and once a month each child would take home a little loaf for supper (see paragraph 23). All these advantages would produce five or six times as much as the money to be paid for the schooling; and this makes it appear that the poorer a man is, the more care he ought to take to send as many of his family as possible; for the greater would be his gain, even in this world's goods, without taking into consideration the gain to his children in better things.

33. But it sometimes happens that parents get behind-hand in their payments for schooling; and when it amounts to more shillings than they can pay, they keep their children away that it may not grow into a still larger debt. This is for want of thought beforehand, and therefore it cannot be a reasonable excuse, if by thoughtfulness it could be avoided. If a man really felt the value of sending his children to school, both to himself in worldly concerns, and to them in higher matters, he would never get into the way of losing such benefits by letting the penny payments ever come to shillings. Every time he takes his wages, he ought at once to send the school-money with the children; knowing that it is the wisest



way to lay out his money, both to secure the children's good, and his own benefit to a much larger amount at the end of the year when he most wants it. If therefore any one is thoughtless enough to put off paying the small sum till they cannot pay the large sum into which it has grown, they must take the consequences. It is hoped that the certainty of this will help to make them regular.

34. Another excuse which is frequently made for irregularity in sending children to school is, that they have got no shoes. The answer to the last excuse answers this also. Shoes are necessary things at all times ; but if by spending a small sum to get a pair of shoes for the child to go to school in, the parent can get also all the advantages already mentioned, and all these advantages must be lost by letting the money go in some other way, and keeping the child bare-foot at home ; what a foolish parent it must be that will not lay out the trifle in a way which brings so much more gain than many times the price of the shoes. But the excuse is often made without cause, at least without sufficient cause ; for the same children who are kept from school for want of shoes, are sent on errands, and turned out to play in the street or in the garden with the shoes they have. Their shoes may be bad, but if they are good enough to enable them to go to shop or to play, they are good enough to enable them to go to school, where they will always find a dry floor, and in cold weather a comfortable fire.

35. It has been very common for parents, who have one child or more sent free to the Charity School, to keep the other children of their family away from the Infants' or National School ; giving as a reason, that unless they do this, they are not likely to get another child free into the Charity when a vacancy happens to occur. This is altogether a mistake : the parents may clearly understand that the trustees give the benefit of the Charity to whoever they

choose; and that this benefit will be received by your Pastor as a sufficient reason for not sending the *same child* to the *day school*: so that the parents may have the advantages mentioned in paragraph 25 if they like. But, on the other hand, as any child may be taken from the Parish Schools and sent to the Charity School without any hinderance from your Pastor, if the other children of the same family are not regularly at the Infants' or National School (according to their age), the parents will be excluded from the advantages as before mentioned.

36. Sometimes elder girls in a family are kept at home to attend to young infants. This commonly happens just at the age when the girls are gaining the greatest advantage, being old enough to learn how to apply all the knowledge which has been taught them in their first years of schooling. A mother should consider that the last year of a child's being at school, is in fact the time when all the former years are turned to account: and that, if that precious year be lost, the previous teaching will not be worth half as much to the child; as for the want of *fastening* the knowledge by thought, it will soon slip away and be forgotten. There are, no doubt, cases in which the most considerate mother may be obliged to make use of a child to help nurse; but if what has been said be rightly felt and understood, a mother will put herself to much inconvenience before she will hinder her daughter from reaping the harvest of real benefit, after all the troublesome sowing-time of the first lessons.

37. It is for want of rightly considering what was said in the last paragraph that some parents are foolish enough to keep their children at home for trifling errands, in which they only save themselves a little trouble. "Mother wanted me, sir," is a very common answer from children who are asked why they were not at school on one day or another. Mothers ought to *want* their children to profit as much as possible

during the short time they can be at school ; knowing that very soon they must go to work, whether they have profited or not. And looking forward to this, mothers and fathers ought to take any trouble themselves, rather than hinder their children by any irregularity.

38. Another reason is, that children are kept from the Sunday School, either morning or afternoon, to enable the mother to come to church. This will always be allowed as a reason *when leave is asked* ; but the child need not be kept from *school* because the mother is to come to *church*. Whenever a parent wishes it, by sending a proper message, the child shall be sent home in proper time after school to allow the mother to come : but this reason cannot be received as an excuse for keeping the child at home during the whole of the Sabbath.

39. The children of the National or Infants' Schools will have their usual holidays during the Christmas week ; and your Pastor hopes that all the parents in the parish will well consider what has been said in this address, and will send *all their children* on the following Monday ; with good resolutions to begin the new year well, and continue to send them regularly. And may God put into all your hearts good desires in this matter ; and, by His Holy Spirit, bring the same to good effect, for the benefit of the present and of the next generation in this parish.

40. We have been considering the excuses which are made for keeping children from school, or irregular in their attendance ; and seven different excuses have been already mentioned. The next excuse is one which the circumstances of many families make it impossible to refuse. At certain seasons of the year, children are taken from the school to be employed in bird-keeping, or pig-keeping, or cow-keeping, or potatoe-picking. In these times, when children can do something to help support themselves, it cannot be expected

that parents should give up the advantages, unless they are able to afford it. Still, the hindrance is so great to the future welfare of the child, that if a father can possibly manage without this help so long as the child is at school, he had better pinch himself a little to secure the benefit of regular attention to the last. As however some cannot manage without it, the reason must be allowed; provided proper notice be given by the parent to obtain leave; without which the child will be marked as kept away without leave. If a child who has a freedom, or half-freedom, is employed in these occupations, and marked *with leave*, a further leave must be asked at the end of the four weeks (see paragraph 15), or else the freedom will be forfeited by the rules, and given to another child. Whenever leave is given or renewed for any of these reasons, a lesson is to be set to the child, which he is to learn during the month of leave. This lesson will be according to the capacity of the child, and the work in which he is to be occupied. If the lesson is properly said at the end of the month, the leave will be renewed for another month (if necessary); and the child will besides be rewarded with a number of tickets, which, for his greater encouragement, shall be in double proportion to the tickets for extra lessons at the Sunday School.

41. There is but one more reason which need be mentioned, and that is the common excuse of bad weather and dirty roads. Every thing has been done that could be managed to take away this excuse as much as possible. The roads are much better than they were. Hollest's pond has been so far filled up, that there is now no danger to the children in that part of the road; and a bridge has been built over the Wonston-water, which makes that part also perfectly safe and good. The Infants' School is now at Sutton, where the little ones have no distance to go; and the children who go to the National School are all

old enough to come from Sutton to Wonston without difficulty. After all this has been done, the parents ought not to be foolishly tender of their children. Still, there are times when the state of the weather affords a proper reason why a child should not be sent out. Your Pastor thinks that he is not expecting too much when he requires the judgment concerning such weather to be left to him; and every reasonable parent will know how he is likely to judge, and will act accordingly. When the weather is really bad, so that the children *ought* not to be sent out, your Pastor will give directions that no marks of absence are to be made that day (whether Sunday or week-day); if he has not given such an order, it is a sign that if he were in the parents' case he would have sent his own child, and then all absent children will be marked, whether the parents send an excuse about the weather or not.

42. Having now considered all the reasons which are commonly given as excuses for keeping children from school, your Pastor thinks it right to state plainly, that proper books will be kept by which every absence and irregularity will be correctly known; and the several rules which have been mentioned in this address will be strictly observed. All these rules shall be sent round the parish; and parents, being fully informed what these rules are, will know how to manage their families so as to conform to them as much as possible. It would not be fair to those who take pains to keep these rules if others were allowed to break them, and no notice were taken of it. This is mentioned to shew how certainly they will be kept, as far as your Pastor is concerned.

42. But while the rules will be strictly kept, your Pastor will do all he can to check every irregularity by which your own or your children's good may be hindered. When a child is kept at home, without proper leave or notice, enquiry shall be made at the parents' house; or, when any thing



happens contrary to the rules which the parents ought to remedy, such notice or warning shall be given as will afford them an opportunity to consider and take the proper steps for putting things right. This will be done, supposing that the parents really desire to do the duty which God has put upon them in giving them children to bring up; and in the sincere hope that, when their minister points out to them where they have failed, or how they may do it better, they will take it kindly that he does *his* duty in trying to help them to do *theirs*.

44. Besides the minister and the parents, there are other persons also in the parish who are directly concerned in this matter, and who have a duty to perform, which they willingly undertook, and which, no doubt, they are also willing to fulfil. These are the Sponsors. A regular register has been kept of the Sponsors of every baptized child in this parish for several years. The duty of these church-officers (who are all Communicants) has been fully explained to them in No. XI. of the Confirmation Tracts; and, to enable them to fulfil one part of it your Pastor intends in future to give them notice whenever any hindrance may occur in the teaching of the little children concerning whom it is their "parts and duties to see that they are taught." As the minister does *his* best to make this duty of the Sponsors easy, by affording the means of instruction to their god-children, he has a right to expect that they will also do *their* best, to see that the children are not deprived of the teaching thus offered them. A kind neighbourly visit from a godfather or godmother, to enquire how the godchild is going on, and why he was not at school at such a time, may turn the scale in the parent's mind, in favour of good sense and the child's benefit; and may, with God's blessing, be the means of setting matters right. This is the proper use of the office of Sponsor in the ministry of a parish.



45. Your Pastor desires to repeat here, with reference to this matter, what he has very often said on other matters as well as this. He invites every parent in the parish to come to him freely, whenever they want advice concerning their children; whenever there is any case of doubt, or any cause of complaint. He is always ready to hear what they may have to say: he appoints the time after the Cottage Readings, at Sutton, on Thursdays, to see any person who may wish to speak to him; but this appointment is merely for the convenience of the parishioners, as well as his own; and, besides this, any person may see him at the Rectory whenever he is at home.

46. Your Pastor cannot close these remarks upon the education of your children, without calling your attention to one point which is the most important of all. He entreats each parent to consider the great influence of **EXAMPLE AT HOME** upon every child, either for good or for bad. It is very hard work to teach a child good things; and it is very easy work to teach a child bad things. After all the hard work of teaching a child good things at school for a few hours in the day, if the child has bad things taught at home, what can possibly happen, but that the trouble will be all thrown away, and *that the child will grow up bad*. For example,—a child who swears, or uses bad language, is punished at school, that he may be corrected, and the other children warned. If, when he goes home, *he hears his parents swear or use bad language*, the punishment at school produces no correction: he knows indeed that his parents deserve to be punished, but this only makes him disrespect the parent; while he takes advantage of the example to go on in his own sin; and adds to it the further sin of cunning and falsehood, in order that he may avoid the punishment, though he does not avoid the cause. The same consequence results from every other bad example

which a parent may set before the children. What is taught at school may be expected to bring good fruit, if it be helped by good example and care at home; but it will be turned to a bad account, if it be opposed by a contrary conduct in those whom the children are constantly charged to respect and obey.

47. The most painful and discouraging part of the state of this parish is the sad condition of a great number of young lads, and some of the elder girls. The present condition of these is the greatest warning that parents can have; for the fathers and mothers of those who are now most unruly can look back to the time when they allowed these same children to be unruly without due order or correction; and neglect and irregularity at school, or bad example at home, have brought forth these bitter fruits, as might have been expected. Something may still be done on this point; and God, who hears prayer, may send a blessing upon the endeavours to get these young people into a better state. And besides these, there ought to be some help to good boys and girls, who, after growing too old for the regular schools, have yet much to learn, for which their Sundays may afford them proper opportunity. There were formerly Sunday classes suited to these; but, after being kept open many weeks when nobody attended, they were discontinued. In the hope that God may put into the hearts of parents to assist the endeavour for the benefit of their elder children, these classes shall be opened again. There shall be a lads' class to take in the carter-boys, and those who must be at work all the week; and there shall be an elder girls' class: the particular hours and rules of these classes shall be given with the rules of the other means of instruction.

48. Encouragement Tickets, and other advantages shall be given to those parents who shew their desire to work with the minister, by procuring the regular attendance of

their children who ought to come to the lads' class, or the elder girls' class.

49. Your Pastor often thinks with great anxiety of the condition of the shepherd-boys in the parish, whose occupation keeps them so constantly with their flocks, that they have hardly any opportunity for attending school or church. He hopes to make some arrangement for the benefit of these lads, but is not yet able to state what can be done; except, that the old proverb will hold good in this case, as well as in many others, "where there's a will, there's a way." If any one of them has the will to be taught, let them, or their parents, come to the minister, who will point out the best means that the particular case will admit of.

50. There remains but one more point to be mentioned, to conclude the important subject of this address. There are many persons in this parish who have grown up without having learnt to read; or, who have forgotten what they had learnt, by neglecting it when they first went to work. Some of these feel the great disadvantage they are under, and ought to be willing to take some trouble to make up for their lost time, so that they might be able to read the word of God for themselves. Some years ago there was an adult school in the parish, which was very useful, as the means by which several persons learnt so much as to be able to enjoy the Scriptures by their own reading. Some were kept away by shame; being so foolish as to be more ashamed of being a learner than of being ignorant; but many continued to attend for a long time: by degrees, however, the numbers became less; and at last no one came at all. As, therefore, there are still many persons in the parish (both men and women) who cannot read, a new adult school shall be formed, if any of you desire to take advantage of it. Let all persons who cannot read, give in their name at once; and afterwards, such a time as may be most suitable shall be

fixed for a Mens' Adult school, and also for a Womens' Adult school.

Your Pastor closes this long address by placing all that has been said in it in the hands of God ; praying that He may mercifully please, by the Holy Spirit, to make use of it for the benefit of the little children of this flock, and for the glory of the name of the " great Shepherd of the sheep," Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## XLIX.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RULES REFERRED TO IN THE PASTOR'S ADVENT ADDRESS.

#### I. RULES FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

1. All children are required to attend the Sunday School, from the time they are of an age which fits them for attendance at Church.

2. The children assemble at the school-room at exactly a quarter before nine o'clock every Sunday morning ; and in the chancel at half-past two o'clock every Sunday afternoon : except when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered, when the hour for assembling in the afternoon is at three o'clock.

3. Every child, who has no brother or sister to come to school, shall take home one Encouragement Ticket to the parents ; and those parents who have sent to the school all their children who ought to attend, shall receive two Encouragement Tickets : if any one child of the family is kept at home, only one ticket will be given ; and if two children are kept at home, no Encouragement Ticket will be given, although a third or a fourth child may have come to school.

4. Every time a parent wishes to keep a child at home, during any part of the school or service time, he must obtain leave for that purpose, which shall be given for such causes as are proper.

5. When a child is absent on the Lord's Day without leave, during any part of the regular hours of attendance, it must be considered as some fault in the parents, and two Encouragement Tickets will be deducted from them at the end of the year for every such absence without leave.

6. A short regular lesson is appointed for each class, according to the capacity of the children. This lesson is to be learned at home during the week; and the parents are expected to see that their children learn it properly.

7. After the children have learned the regular lesson of their class, they may also learn at home as much as they are able of that which is appointed for extra lessons. For these extra lessons, when perfectly said, a proportionate number of tickets shall be given to each child: but no extra lesson will be heard, if the regular lesson has not first been properly said.

8. Every child who has passed the whole Sunday without having deserved any mark of disapprobation, shall carry home a certificate of proper conduct. If any child goes home without such a certificate, the parents may be sure that there has been something which deserves reproof; and it is expected that the parents will behave to the child accordingly. Every parent who enquires during the next week will always be informed of the reason why no certificate was given.

9. The marks usually made against children's names are, 1st, for bad conduct in Church;—2nd for bad conduct in School;—3rd, for bad conduct in going home;—4th, for idleness in not being able to say the regular lesson;—5th, for coming late, morning or afternoon;—6th, for being absent

during part, or the whole of the day. On the evening of the last Sunday in each month, the marks made during that month are looked over; and every child who has had no mark at all, is sent home with a small loaf for supper.

## II. RULES FOR THE INFANTS' AND NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

1. Children are admitted into the Infants' School at two years old and upwards.

2. Children are admitted into the National School as soon as they have learned enough to begin the lessons taught there.

3. The money to be paid for schooling at either school is two-pence a week for each child. If three or more children are sent from the same family, the third child, and every one after, pays only one-penny each.

4. There are twenty freedoms; the children who have them pay nothing. And there are ten half freedoms, the children who have them pay only one-penny a week; and if they be the third or fourth children from the same family, they pay nothing.

5. The hours of attendance are at nine in the morning and at two in the afternoon. At the Infant's School there are two half-holidays in the week, Thursday and Saturday afternoons; and at the National School there is one whole holiday in the week, which is Saturday.

6. If the schooling money for any child is owing for more than four weeks (unless the Rector has given leave for a longer period), no more Encouragement Tickets will be given to the parents until the whole amount is paid.

6.\* The children must be sent regularly at the appointed hours, and they must be clean: whenever parents wish to keep a child at home during any part of school hours, they



must obtain leave for that purpose, which shall be given for such causes as are proper.

7. Every child, who has no brother or sister to come to school, shall take home one Encouragement Ticket to the parents; and the parents who have sent every day, all their children who ought to attend, shall receive two Encouragement Tickets for each day: if any one child of the family is kept at home, only one ticket will be given; and if two children are kept at home, no Encouragement Ticket will be given although a third or a fourth child may have come to school.

8. If a child who has a freedom or a half-freedom is absent from school for four weeks, the freedom will be forfeited, unless the absence is produced by illness. If a free child is unable from illness to come to school for eight weeks, the freedom will be given to another child, but shall be returned as soon as a vacancy occurs after the child has recovered.

9. Any child who has leave of absence must have it renewed at the end of four weeks, or else if he has a freedom or half-freedom it will be forfeited.

10. If any child is kept away from school when marked down for correction, or after having been corrected, four tickets will be deducted at the end of the year from the number of the parents' tickets, for every day of absence under such circumstances.

11. Full explanation shall be given to every parent concerning any correction of their children whenever they apply to the school-master; and if they are not satisfied with his explanation, they may apply to the minister who will at once enquire into the matter. But if any parent makes a complaint, or otherwise interferes with the discipline of the school, *in the presence of any child belonging to the school*, for every such complaint or interference ten tickets shall be deducted from them at the end of the year.

12. If there should be occasion to punish any child for conduct which is extremely bad and immoral (such as swearing, lying, stealing, &c.), the minister intends to make also diligent enquiry concerning the manner in which such child has been treated at home as to such matters; and if, upon due examination, it be found that the example at home has encouraged the child in the offence for which punishment has been given, such a number of tickets shall be deducted from the parents at the end of the year as may seem proper to the minister, under the circumstances.

13. At the time of the harvest holidays, the books of attendance at school and the characters and attention of the children will be examined, and a proportionate number of tickets will be added to those parents whose children have both attended regularly, and also conducted themselves in such a manner as warrants the belief that the parents at home have done their best to help the instruction and correction given at school.

### III. RULES FOR THE LADS' AND ELDER GIRLS' CLASSES.

1. There will be two classes of lads, and two of elder girls.

2. They are all to attend at a quarter past nine o'clock every Sunday morning.

3. Such as may be able, are to attend also at half-past two o'clock on Sunday afternoons; except when the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is administered, when the hour will be three.

4. The parents of each lad or girl shall receive an Encouragement Ticket for each of these attendances: that is, two tickets for each of those who have attended both morning and afternoon; and one ticket for each of those who have attended only morning, or only afternoon.

5. No ticket shall be given to any one who has not come at the proper hour.

6. Any lad or girl that desires to learn lessons in the course of the week, shall receive tickets in proportion to the quantity which has been properly learned and said on the Sunday.

#### IV. RULES CONCERNING THE TICKETS.

1. There are four ways of obtaining tickets: two by the children and two by the parents. 1st. Tickets are earned by the children for lessons. 2ndly. Tickets are given to the children to reward good conduct and attention. 3rdly. Encouragement tickets are sent to the parents. 4thly. The certificates of the children's proper conduct at the Sunday School are exchanged for tickets, at the rate of one ticket for every four certificates, and given to the parents.

2. The tickets will be collected three times in the year; in the first week of January, at Easter, and at Michaelmas. Tickets not brought in at one collection day, will not be allowed to be counted afterwards.

3. For every hundred tickets belonging to a child, ten additional tickets will be given to the parents.

4. During the course of the year, a number of articles of all sorts, suitable both for parents and children, will be collected by subscription. The Rector will give a certain fixed sum, and will endeavour to obtain as much more as possible. The articles contributed, or purchased with the subscriptions, shall be arranged; and each article marked to be given for such a number of tickets, as may be proportioned to the whole number which have been issued, so that there may be something to be given for every ticket. A day will be fixed to be called the Ticket Sale day. The children shall be admitted first, and allowed to exchange

their tickets for whatever they choose, according to the number of tickets marked on each article. Afterwards the parents shall be admitted, and allowed to exchange their tickets in the same manner.

5. If any parent and child wish to join their tickets together to obtain any particular article, they must first get leave for that purpose.

6. As the articles will always be arranged so as to include the whole number of tickets, any persons neglecting to exchange their tickets on the sale day will lose the benefit of their tickets altogether, as nothing will be given for them after that day.

#### V. RULES FOR THE PENNY CLUB.

1. Every child in the Infants' and National Schools, has the privilege of paying one penny a week throughout the year, to which will be added the same sum of one penny for every week during which the child has been regular in attendance at school.

2. If a child is absent from school one whole day *without leave* (unless prevented by sickness), the penny will not be added for that week.

3. The pennies will be added for all the weeks of allowed holidays.

4. At the end of the year the whole amount contributed by the parents, and added by the Rector, according to these rules, will be expended in clothing to be chosen by the parents.

5. If the penny is left unpaid by the parents for four weeks together (unless leave is given for a longer period), it will be taken for granted that no more payments will be made;—the advantages will be forfeited, and the money already paid by the parents will be returned to them.

## VI. RULES FOR THE CLOTHING AND FUEL FUNDS.

Every person whom the Rector may admit in future to the advantages of the Clothing Fund, or the Fuel Fund, must attend to the following Rules, according to which these funds will be regulated :—

1. Persons permitted by the Rector may pay either to the Clothing Fund, or to the Fuel Fund, or to both.

2. Each person may pay one-penny a week, or two-pence, or three-pence.

3. The amount paid into the Clothing Fund, (if regular) shall be encreased at the end of the year as follows :—

|                                              | <i>s.</i> | <i>d.</i> |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Those who pay one-penny a week shall receive | 6         | 6         |
| two-pence . . . . .                          | 13        | 0         |
| three-pence . . . . .                        | 19        | 0         |

The amount shall be expended in clothing at the choice of the person who pays.

4. The amount paid into the Fuel Fund, (if regular) shall be encreased at the end of the year as follows :—

|                                              |      |         |
|----------------------------------------------|------|---------|
| Those who pay one-penny a week shall receive | 400  | weight. |
| two-pence . . . . .                          | 800  | . .     |
| three-pence . . . . .                        | 1200 | . .     |

The coals must be brought from Winchester by the person who pays.

5. The payments must be made weekly, either to Mr. Shayler at the school-room in the course of the week; or to the Rector after the Wednesday Lecture.

6. If the money is left unpaid, one penny shall be deducted from the amount added by the Rector for the second or the third week on which the money was not regularly paid,

either according to these rules, or to the permission given for delay under particular circumstances.

7. If four weeks are left unpaid (unless leave has been obtained for a longer period), it will be taken for granted that no further payments will be made—the advantages will be forfeited, and the money already received will be returned.

8. Any person desiring to obtain leave to make their payments at any other period than weekly must state their reasons to the Rector, who will consider them, and decide accordingly.

9. Every person living in the parish at the beginning of the year, who wishes to pay to either of these funds, must apply to the Rector, and if admitted, must begin their payments before the 31st of January. No persons, except new comers, will be admitted afterwards; except under very particular circumstances, to be judged of by the Rector.

10. The Rector does not mean to admit any person to the benefit of these funds who have children of proper age to come to school, unless they are sent to the school. And if any persons who pay into either of these funds, and who send their children to school, keep any child away without leave (except when ill), one penny will be deducted from the amount added by the Rector for every week of such irregular absence from school.

#### L.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

3 Nov. 1839.

THE Ticket Sale will take place next Tuesday; and your Pastor takes the opportunity of calling your attention to that important subject connected with it—the benefit of diligence with respect to the early and regular education of your children. If you will look back to the various addresses which have been sent round the parish for the last seven



years, you will find that abundant means have been constantly provided for your help in this matter. Continual encouragement has been given to those who take advantage of the means; and by unceasing exhortation you have been urged to do your duty.

At last Advent, plain rules were sent round the parish, and an exact account has been kept since that time as to every child and every parent. A statement is sent round the parish with this which shews the result of this Account. It is printed on a broad sheet, and every parent is advised to paste it up in their houses. There are two parts in this printed statement. The first shews the account as it concerns the children; and the second the account as it concerns the parents. Let every parent look out for their own names, and then also for the names of their children; and they will see, either the advantage of their diligence and attention to the rules, or the disadvantage of their neglect of them. Let every one profit by the lesson which this Ticket Account may teach them. If any parent wishes for further particulars, as to any forfeited tickets, every information shall be given upon application.

The first list of parents contains the names of those whose children have shewn most attention in learning, so that they have each earned more than 100 tickets. This has no reference to the *attendance* of the children, but only to their *diligence*; so that if a child had been twenty times absent without leave, but nevertheless had earned a great many tickets, the parents would still be in this list. But compare this list with the *third list* of parents, which contains the names of those whose children have been absent without cause in the course of the year. Now it so happens that though there are twenty-three names in the first list, and eighteen names in the third list, there is only one name which occurs in *both* lists. What does this shew? why that

the parents, who take care that their children shall not keep away from the Sunday School without some real reason, are just those whose children are most diligent and desirous of learning : while, on the other hand, the parents who are careless in not making their children attend regularly, are just those whose children do not shew diligence in learning. May the Spirit of God apply this practical argument to the heart of every careless and over-indulgent parent in the parish.

## LI.

OBSERVATIONS RESPECTING THE  
TICKETS.

3 Nov. 1890.

TICKETS are earned by the children for extra lessons ; or are given to them as encouragement for good conduct.

Tickets which have been so bestowed are forfeited by the children thus :—

One for every time a child is late at Sunday School, morning or afternoon.

Four for every time a child has been crossed, because the Sunday School regular lesson has not been learned.

Six for every time a child has been marked down for bad conduct in Church, or in Sunday School, or while going home on Sunday.

As many Tickets as may be judged necessary are taken away from a child for any particular case of very bad conduct.

*Note.*—No child has been crossed for not learning the regular lesson at the Sunday School during the time of harvest. No child has been marked late when the weather was such as to make it improper for the children to come out.

Encouragement Tickets are sent to the Parents at the

rate of one ticket for each day on which a child has attended at proper hours, either at the Sunday School, or at the National School, or at the Infants' School.

A certificate of good conduct is sent home with every child against whom there has been no mark of any kind, on each Sunday; and one Encouragement Ticket is given for every four such certificates produced by the parent.

Ten tickets are added to the parents' whenever a child has earned 100 tickets without any deduction.

Two tickets are withdrawn from the parents every time a child is absent from *the Sunday School without leave*.

Four tickets are withdrawn in case a child has been absent without leave on the Sunday after any mark had been made against the name.

From *ten to one* hundred tickets are withdrawn from any parent who may interfere with the discipline of the School: the number of tickets is proportioned to the degree of improper interference.

*Note.*—The marks of *absence without leave* only relate to the Sunday School: and no mark of absence has been made against any children when the parent has notified a sufficient reason for keeping them at home. The reasons which have been sent by some of the parents, and allowed, have been sickness, attending infants while mothers come to Church, cow-keeping, sheep-keeping, pig-keeping, bird-keeping — and particular occasions, properly explained.

The total number of tickets this year has been

|                                              |         |      |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|------|
| Earned by 99 Children                        | 8491    |      |
| Forfeited by them                            | 813     |      |
|                                              |         |      |
|                                              | Leaving | 7678 |
| Given to the parents of 58 families          | 16,477  |      |
| Added for their Children's tickets above 100 | 350     |      |
|                                              |         |      |
|                                              | 16,827  |      |

Withdrawn from them for the absence of  
their Children without leave, and for  
improper interference

484

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Leaving 16343

---

Making together 24,021

## LII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

18 Oct. 1840.

It has long been the custom to wind up all the school accounts for the year at Michaelmas, so as to begin afresh on the first of October. Your Pastor has generally explained the result of the year, in a public manner, in preparation for the Ticket Sale when one practical benefit of diligence and attention to the rules is afforded, both to the parents and the children. The ticket sale will take place next Friday; and, according to his custom, your Pastor will now proceed to lay before you such a statement of the results of the last year as may be gathered from the Ticket Account.

The number of the tickets, which have been earned by the children last year, has been 7573. This is 918 less than the previous year. As 99 children earned tickets then, and only 95 now, there were four less who have endeavoured to earn tickets: 45 of these children have forfeited no less than 738 tickets; and 19 other children have incurred forfeits to the amount of 448 tickets, of which they had none to pay. The whole number of forfeited tickets therefore in 1186; and this number is 373 more than the tickets forfeited last year: making the amount of tickets due to the children only 6387; which is 1291 tickets less than the year before.

The account of the parents' tickets is as follows :— 68 families have received tickets ; which is 10 more than received them last year. The number of tickets given to the whole is 16,778 ; this is 301 more than last year : 360 tickets have been added to those parents whose children have earned more than 100 tickets ; this is 10 more than last year ; making the amount 17,138. From this number 288 tickets have been forfeited, in consequence of children's having been kept from the Sunday School without leave. This is 204 less than last year ; and leaves the total number of parents' tickets 16,858 : which, added to the amount of childrens' tickets, makes the whole number for which the ticket sale is to be apportioned, amount to 23,245 ; which is 776 less than in the year before.

From this general statement we will proceed to something a little more particular. That this may be done more easily, lists, similar to those which were sent last year, will be sent to you for your information, dividing the children as follows :

List I. contains the names of children who have earned above 100 tickets, without any deduction. There are 19 names in this list ; and the number of tickets is 3027. In comparing this list with that of last year, when it contained 18 children and 2622 tickets, we find that seven names are in it now which have been brought up from List II. ; one from List III : and one from List IV : while nine names occur in both years.

List II. contains the names of children who have earned under 100 tickets without any deduction. There are 31 names in this list ; and the number of tickets is 1569. Last year it contained twenty-nine children, and 1834 tickets : three of these children were last year in List I, and are now brought down ; three were in List III ; and one in List IV ; and these have been brought up : ten names occur in both years.

These two are the only lists of children against whom there has been no mark during the year. Their tickets together amount to 4596; which is 140 more than last year; and there are three more of these attentive children than there were last year.

List III. contains the names of children who have earned above 100 tickets, but who have forfeited some. There are nine names in this list; and the number of tickets earned is 1251. They have forfeited eighty-five tickets (twenty-five for lessons; five for being late; and fifty-two for bad conduct.) Last year there were fifteen children in this list, who had earned 2099 tickets, and forfeited 184 (69 for lessons; one for late; and 114 for bad conduct.) In this list there are three children brought down from the first list of last year; and one brought up from List IV; five names occur in the lists of both years.

List IV. contains the names of children who have earned less than 100 tickets, but who have forfeited some. There are thirty-six names in this list; and the number of tickets earned is 1636. They have forfeited 755 tickets (520 for lessons; seventeen for being late; and 218 for bad conduct.) Last year there were thirty-eight children in this list, who had earned 1938 tickets, and forfeited 623 tickets (424 for lessons; fifteen for being late; and 184 for bad conduct.) In this list, eleven children have been brought down from higher lists of last year (one from List I; five from List II; and five from List III :) while but one has been brought up from List V. Nineteen names occur in the lists of both years.

List V. contains the names of the children who have earned no tickets, but have incurred forfeits of tickets according to the rules. There are no less than nineteen names on this list; and the number of tickets forfeited is 358. This is a very sad alteration for the worse since last year, when



there were only four names on the list, and only forty-six tickets forfeited: two of the children are brought down from list II; and eight from list IV; while two remain upon the same list in both years.

We will now proceed to the lists of parents. The same particulars in these lists would not be of the same use; for the number of encouragement tickets is increased so much by large families, that the total number sent to any one family does not convey a notion of the attention paid to the rules. Still it may be useful to state some particulars.

List I, contains the names of those parents to whom extra-encouragement tickets are given, because of the attention of their children in earning more than 100 tickets. There are twenty names in this list; which is three less than there were last year. There are 360 tickets added, which is ten more than last year: two of these names were in List II, last year; and two were in List III; and ten were in the same lists of both years.

List II, contains the names of the parents, besides those in the first list, who have not forfeited any tickets for keeping their children at home. There are twenty-eight names in this list, where there were only seventeen last year: nine of these were in list I, last year; and one was in list III; while seven were in the same list in both years.

List III, contains the names of parents by whom tickets have been forfeited for their children's absence without leave. There are twenty-three names in this list; and the number of tickets forfeited is 303. Last year there were only eighteen names: and the forfeits were 392: two of these names are brought down from list I, of last year: and five from list II: while thirteen names remain on the lists of both years. But it is important to remark that there are three names on this list which are found in list I. (See Word No. 8 of last year, with Calender 49.)

List IV, of last year contained the names of those parents from whom tickets were withdrawn for having encouraged children in evil by interfering in the School discipline. There is happily no name to insert in such a list this year.

But it is unhappily necessary to make another list, for a class of parents for which there was no occasion last year.

List V, contains the names of the parents of those children who have incurred forfeits of tickets, while they have not earned any tickets to pay. There were but four such children last year, and therefore no such list was made out. But as there are nineteen such cases this year, besides five children who forfeited *more* tickets than they had earned, it becomes absolutely necessary to draw the parents' attention to this, which can only be done by deducting the forfeited tickets from their own. This is the more important, as out of the fourteen names included in this list, no less than ten are also found in list III, which shews that they have encouraged their children in being absent from the Sunday School without cause. To make this distinction plain, the four parents whose names are not in the list III, are excused from paying the forfeited tickets.

There is very much to consider in making a proper use of all these lists. Your Pastor advises you all to think them well over, and consider what sign they shew of the progress made in the education of your children. He will point out to you in a future Word what he considers to be the general result of these observations. But it would be very wise, if, in preparation for his remarks, every one of the parents would try to find out, for themselves, what these lists bring to light concerning their own conduct with respect to their children's education.

In the mean time he invites you all to the ticket sale on Friday; previous to which it is his intention to give a special mark of encouragement to those children in the first

six classes, who, having attended the school during the past year, have had no mark against themselves, nor any forfeit of tickets by their parents. There are nineteen such children, each of whom will receive a medal, as a prize, with permission to wear it whenever they attend the School, as long as they continue without any such marks.

## LIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

25 Oct. 1840.

YOUR Pastor last week sent you a very particular account of the distribution of the tickets given this year to the children of the school and their parents: and on Friday last the holders of these tickets were rewarded, in exact proportion to the tickets given, by receiving the useful articles which a number of kind friends had added to your Pastor's donation. It is to be hoped that the parents will not merely be thankful for the charitable gifts thus bestowed; but that they will take some pains to profit by the care which has been used in giving them the tickets exactly according to the rules laid down for the education of their children, and also to give them information of the reasons for that exactness in every case. The object which your Pastor has, in the whole of this arrangement about the tickets, is to make you clearly understand, that, while he is rejoiced to give freely whatever he can afford, and to obtain as much help as he can for the same purpose, he has made up his mind to give what assistance he can to the parents of the children of his flock, according as he finds them desirous of doing their duty to their children, and willing to help him in training them up in the way they should go. The whole plan of the tickets, and

the ticket sale, has this object in view ; and it will fail in this object unless the parents take pains to discover the reason why they have more or less tickets, and therefore more or less benefit at the sale.

It was with the view of helping you in doing this, that the particulars were given to you in the last Word. And with the same view a few observations will be added now, in order to draw attention to the general result ; and thus to induce each one to trace out, in a particular manner, his own share of the right or of the wrong state of things which the account sets forth.

And first, with respect to the state of things shewn by the lists of children's tickets. The comparison of these lists with those of the previous year seems, at first sight, to be favourable to the former. Upon the whole amount, a few less children have tried to earn tickets ; the number of tickets earned is much less ; and the number of tickets forfeited is greater. But here we find the advantage of going into particulars ; for, by examining the lists, there are some things which tend to alter this first impression. The two first lists contain the names of attentive children who have had no marks against them. Now there are three more children in these lists than there were last year ; they have earned many more tickets ; and no less than thirteen names are found here now, which were found in the lower lists of inattentive children last year. It must however be added, that there are eleven names missing this year from these lists, which are to be searched for in those lower lists. Still upon the whole, the state of these lists is encouraging.

The same cannot be said of the two next lists, which contain the account of those children who have had the number of their tickets reduced, in consequence of inattention or bad conduct. If you will examine these lists, you will find many things to shew the need of great care and watchfulness over

your children; and to make you feel that you must persevere in a steady course, even with the best children, or else you will find them falling back. Some children, who were attentive last year, are in these lists for inattention. And some, who were inattentive then, have forfeited more for inattention now than before. Then comes the fifth list, the length of which is a very bad sign. It is because the forfeits in these lists are so much greater than last year that, upon the whole, they outweigh the increase in the advantage gained in the two first lists.

As to the parents' lists, the first two are satisfactory; and by a comparison with last year, the same may be said of the third list; for the forfeits for keeping children at home without cause are less; though it is to be lamented that it contains many of the same names as last year; which shews that so many careless parents have not improved under all the advice that has been given them. This list shews the carelessness of the parents, in keeping their children from the Sunday School; the first list, shews those parents whose children have been particularly attentive. As these are two different matters, the same parents' names might have been in both lists. How then does it happen that only three of the names in list No. I, are found also in list No. III? It is a question very easy to answer: careful and steady parents will find that their children become attentive; and inattentive children are generally signs of careless parents.

There has been no name to insert in list No. IV, which is a great improvement; but the necessity for making list No. V, is a very bad sign indeed; as it shews that so many parents have taken so little pains to induce their children to be diligent: and that the result has been so much carelessness and bad conduct in the children of those who have thus been inattentive.

The result of the whole seems to be, on the one hand, that

there has been an encouraging improvement in some children, and quite the reverse in others: and that there have been some parents who have shown a more anxious desire for the real welfare of their children than formerly; and some who have been much more neglectful of them. A little attentive examination of these lists will enable every parent to discover in which class they may place themselves; and in what degree they may take to themselves a share of the encouragement, or the blame. But if any parents should be at a loss to find it out for themselves, your Pastor will be very willing to help them, if they will apply to him personally.

The experience of the year just ended, and the result of a careful examination of the accounts of tickets, have made it necessary to add two rules to those which were sent round with the lists for the year 1839. Your Pastor desires to assure you that those former rules, together with these now put forth, will be acted upon with the greatest exactness. A book is kept in which every thing is written down week by week: and before the yearly sale, the ticket accounts are made up precisely according to the contents of this book. The additional rules are as follows:—

1st. When the parents send their children to the day schools, but not to the Sunday School, they will be considered to come under the rule by which “two tickets are withdrawn from the parents every time a child is absent from the Sunday School without leave.” Exceptions will be made in the cases of those children at the Infants’ School who are too young to come to the Sunday School.

2ndly. If any child forfeits a greater number of tickets than are earned, the number so forfeited will be deducted from the parents’ tickets. This has been acted upon this year.

After much consideration your Pastor has determined to call upon the Sponsors, as the Trustees of the Church for



the education of her infant members, to assist in the important work, by "seeing that the children are taught" according to the duty they undertook at the baptism of their several godchildren. There are various ways in which, in the exercise of Christian and neighbourly kindness, they may fulfil the purpose for which their office was appointed. These ways will be pointed out to them at the Sponsors'-meeting, which will take place on Friday. Your Pastor has also determined to admit them to a share in the benefits of the ticket-sale, in proportion as they are willing to act in the way which he will point out to them. And in order that they may receive this benefit, it is intended to give them tickets in proportion as the conduct of their godchildren shall prove that they have acted according to the plan proposed. The whole plan, with the number of tickets to be given as a mark of encouragement for the Sponsors, will be explained on Friday evening; and every Sponsor in the parish is invited to attend at the Infants' School-room at Sutton, for the purpose of hearing the explanation.

It is however necessary to inform all the parents of those children who have freedoms or half-freedoms, that, whenever a Sponsor is willing to act according to the instructions of the minister, but is hindered by the parents, the privilege of the freedom will be immediately taken from the child: and also that, should any parent distinctly refuse to concur in the arrangement, by which the assistance of the Sponsors is employed for the benefit of the children, the particular case will be enquired into, and the parents' name will be included in List IV, with a proportionate number of tickets deducted, "for having encouraged their children in evil by interfering in the school discipline."

## LIV.

## A TESTIMONY FROM THE PARENTS.

A CLERGYMAN, who was anxious to ascertain the effects of the Infants' School upon the parents, requested permission to visit any cottagers he might select in the parish, without being guided by any previous knowledge of their character, in order that he might make such enquiries as he thought proper on the subject. He prepared eleven questions, which he put to four different families, into whose houses he went without indication from any one; and he wrote down the answers of each parent as he received them. The following was the result:—

## FIRST QUESTION.

Have you a child in the Infants' School, and how long?

- First answer. One—two months.  
 Second „ Two.  
 Third „ One—a year.  
 Fourth „ Two—two and one year.

## SECOND QUESTION.

How old is it?

- First answer. Two and a half years.  
 Second „ Six years three months.  
 Third „ Two years eight months.  
 Fourth „ Five and a half years, and four years.

## THIRD QUESTION.

Were you asked to send it?

- First answer. No.  
 Second „ No.  
 Third „ No.  
 Fourth „ Yes.

FOURTH QUESTION.

If not asked, would you have sent it?

First answer. Yes.

Second „ Yes.

Third „ Should have applied. Well worth the two-pence.

Fourth „ Would have equally sent them.

FIFTH QUESTION.

Did you ever send your child to a Dame's School?

First answer. Never younger than six years.

Second „ They would not take so early.

Third „ One at six to Free School. Thinks no Dame's School would teach as well.

Fourth „ No. Because not attended to, and would not learn so much.

SIXTH QUESTION.

Where did they learn most?

First answer. Not long enough to know.

Second „ Learn fast.

Third „ \_\_\_\_\_ } See answers to

Fourth „ \_\_\_\_\_ } fifth question.

SEVENTH QUESTION.

Where were they most trouble to you?

First answer. No trouble to me. Never cried after the first week. Now anxious to go.

Second „ At home are the most trouble.

Third „ Takes a great deal of trouble off.

Fourth „ Would be at home two hours from Dame's School. Trouble is felt on Saturdays, when they are at home.

## EIGHTH QUESTION.

Do you see as much of them as you wish to do ?

First answer. Wish she would stay all day.

Second „ Do not wish to see them sooner home, they would only be in mischief. I know they are now safe.

Third „ Would feel glad if they could always stay the whole day, but come home to dinner.

Fourth „ They would surprise a person of twenty or forty, by what they say. See them quite as much as I wish.

## NINTH QUESTION.

Do you think you are doing your duty by it, in sending it so soon away ?

First answer. I really think it my bounden duty. I wish I had had the opportunity for the rest.

Second „ More than if I kept them at home.

Third „ Thinks she acts as a mother, because she learns what she would not at home.

Fourth „ When a child can learn evil, it can learn good : but it can learn evil as soon as it can speak.

## TENTH QUESTION.

Do you think you love them as much ?

First answer. Being the last, I rather like it the best.

Second „ Love them as much as if always at home.

Third „ Those few hours are so different from a week, a day and night, &c. Love them quite as well.

Fourth answer. When they come home and can tell what they have been doing, and that they have learned good, it increases our love for them.

### ELEVENTH QUESTION.

Do you think that they lose their affection in any degree towards you ?

First answer. No, I cannot see that it does. I think it's the better.

Second „ Would always like their mother best. It is not as if they were always from home.

Third „ Not in the least.

Fourth „ I think the affection of the children is heightened.

## GENERAL DETAILS.

### ANNUAL ADDRESSES AT ADVENT.

#### LV.

#### *Instructions to the Parishioners of Wonston concerning the TEXT PAPERS.*

I HAVE reason to hope that benefit has arisen from the text papers which have now been given for nearly two years, to enable you better to understand the Sermons. There were thirty-three of these text papers during the last year; and at the head of each, the subject of instruction which the Church appoints weekly has been shewn. It is very important that every one of you should attend to this instruction. It is a continual witness amongst you, that if any one neglects religion, no excuse can be made hereafter on account of ignorance. As I do not promise that a text paper shall be printed every week (though I mean that it shall as often as possible), I am very desirous that your minds should be regularly directed to the Church Instruction, which is a different thing from the clergyman's own preaching, or personal ministry. This has induced me to make an addition to the text papers; so that whether the subject of the Sermon be printed or not, there shall always be something to direct your minds to that important instruction. I have also endeavoured to improve the plan of the text papers; and upon this first Sunday in Advent there will be given to you a paper containing the—

## WONSTON TEXT PAPER, AND THE WEEKLY CALENDAR.

That you may make use of both these in a profitable manner, I desire to call your attention to the following

### INSTRUCTIONS.

1. The *text paper* will this year be more full and particular than formerly. A short statement will be made of every point in the sermon; so that you are not now left to find out so much of the subject from the texts as before. To each of these short statements will be added references to such texts as shew what is meant, or as prove its truth. Formerly only such texts were printed as were spoken of in the sermon; but now several texts will be inserted for you to refer to afterwards, and perhaps only one or two of them will be mentioned in preaching. This will save time, while I shall have the confidence that you can prove the Scripture authority for every point, as much as if I had done so for you in the sermon.

Though you may have the text paper while the sermon is being preached, yet it does not seem the best plan for you to turn to your Bibles at the time, as it delays you, and takes off attention from what follows. It will be better that you should use the text paper to quicken your attention during the sermon; and afterwards refer to all the texts, to impress the subject more firmly upon your minds.

2. The *Questions for Self-examination* are meant to help you to find out whether the different parts of the sermon are really profitable to you. It is not hearing a sermon which will do you any good; it is applying what you hear with prayer, which brings profit; and it is doing what you are taught which brings the blessing. (Rom. ii. 13. James i. 22.)



You should seriously put these questions to yourselves several times in the course of the week.

3. The *Epistle for the Day* will be explained in a very short manner at the Sunday Afternoon Service, so as to help you to understand it better when you read it at home yourselves. While it is being explained you had better refer to it in your Prayer Books, or in the Bible.

4. *Questions to be answered.* When people come to be taught, a great deal depends upon the desire to learn which they bring with them; and if their minds have been before employed upon the subject, they learn so much the quicker. If you really desire to profit by the sermons as you ought, it would be well to go the best way to work; and one sure way to attend better and learn more will be to have some thought upon the subject beforehand. To help you to do this, I mean to prepare three questions, all of which have something to do with the subject of the next sermon I propose to preach. If you can answer these questions you will be able to understand that sermon a great deal better than if you had not thought about them at all. These questions shall be printed with the text paper; and I recommend every one of you to think about them in the course of the week, and try to answer them in your own minds. By attending to the sermon on the next Sunday Morning, you will find out whether your thoughts have been right or wrong. I think this so important that I should advise such of my parishioners as are more educated and are able to write, if they have time, to write down their answers to the questions, and send them to me. This they may do without putting their names. For greater convenience in doing this, I will have the questions printed every week upon a few sheets of paper; and any person wishing to write answers may have these by applying at the school-room, or at the Rector's room in Sutton, or to the District Visitors. These answers

must, however, be sent to the school-room, or to the vestry, some time before nine o'clock on Sunday morning. The questions will be properly explained and answered in the course of the Evening Instruction in the school-room; and the advantage of my having the written answers before, is that if there should be any mistake in some answer which I should not otherwise have noticed, I may set that point right, but without publicly mentioning the wrong answer.

5. The *Weekly Calendar* is that which I purpose to give you, whether there is a text paper or not. It first shews what is the *Church Instruction* for the week, and the Scriptures that the Church appoints for her members to read. It also contains a *Text* chosen out of the Bible *for every day* in the week, and which you are to consider as the particular instruction of your minister, to help you to keep in mind the general instruction of the Church. It is a very good thing to have some part of the Word of God to think upon in the day. This good thing is often neglected because there is not time to read the Bible in the morning before the labourer goes to his work, and when he is at his work he has not got his Bible with him. Now, if a man has attended to the Church Instruction on Sunday, and afterwards wants something to help his memory and to stir up his mind about it, let him look out the daily Text marked in the *Weekly Calendar*—It is the minister's help to his memory, and the Lord's message to his soul. It is very short—it will not hinder him in the morning when he goes out. Let him think it over; and, if he likes, he may learn it by heart. It will do him good, and keep many an idle or evil thought out of his mind, and make the time pass quickly and pleasantly. May God send His blessing with these texts to every one of you that use them. This *Weekly Calendar* affords also a good opportunity of reminding you of the different means of grace and instruction which occur in the course of the week, so that you

may not lose the advantage of them through forgetfulness. It will be useful also to insert the portions which are fixed for the regular or extra lessons of the Sunday School, that you may assist your children in learning them, and not let the children get marked for neglect. It will be also a convenient way of giving any notices to the people, which may be occasionally necessary.

6. You will find that mention is made in the Weekly Calendar of the *Rector's Room at Sutton*. As Wonston is some little distance from Sutton, I have hired a room there in the house of the Sunday-school-master, where I shall have the Cottage Readings, except when they are at the houses of those who are so infirm that they cannot go abroad. I wish all my parishioners at Sutton to understand, that for their convenience, I will wait at this room for half an hour after having had a Cottage Reading there; and that any person wishing to speak with me may take that opportunity of finding me. Notice of the hour will always be given in the Weekly Calendar. If this hour does not suit them, they must come to the Rectory at Wonston. A number of Bibles, Testaments, Prayer Books, Hymn Books, and Text Books, will be kept at the room at Sutton, as well as at the church, which you may purchase at the same reduced prices. The "Cottager's Guide to the new Testament," and any of the Wonston Tracts, may also be bought there.

7. At the end of the Weekly Calendar you will find, *A Word from the Pastor to his Flock*. There are many things that a minister desires to say to his people—to help them on their way—to warn them of their danger—to encourage them—or to reprove them, which cannot be made always the subject of preaching, and which, nevertheless, he feels it his duty to speak upon (2 Tim. iv. 2). Circumstances also, and seasons, require some particular word, applicable just at that moment, and not at any other (Prov. xv. 23). I pur-

pose, therefore, in this "Word from the Pastor to his Flock," in a short way, to put before you "the present truth." May God enable me to speak the word in season, and you to receive the word in love. This will usually end with a suggestion as to some proper subjects for prayer; and perhaps I may add a little hymn to suit the instruction for the week.

## LVI.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

UPON THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR.

*Advent Sunday, Nov. 29, 1835.*

THE WONSTON WEEKLY CALENDAR has been now continued through a whole year, without leaving out one Sunday. I desire to thank God who has enabled your Pastor to carry on this plan: and I pray that it may not have been without advantage to the people. As might have been expected, some have taken little account of it; but there are also others who have taken account of it, and who seem to find it convenient and profitable in many ways. The number of these has determined me to go on in the same course during another year, or, at least, during so much of it as it may please God to permit and enable me; and I earnestly pray to Him to make the next year's Calendars and Text Papers not only as profitable as they have already been, but to increase the benefit to the people a hundred-fold. I call upon each of you to pray for the same thing, and to try to profit each in his own case. Some alterations will be made in the arrangements this year, which begin to-day.

1. The *Text Papers* will be printed as usual whenever there is a fitting occasion. Twenty-six were printed during the

last year. It is probable that a greater number may be printed this year, as none were sent out during the instruction for the Confirmation. The questions to be considered and answered in your minds to enable you better to understand the sermon on the Sunday after, will be added to the Text Paper as often as it can be conveniently managed; and whenever this is the case, you are recommended particularly to attend to them. In consequence of the arrangement now made on the Communion Sundays (see the Present Truth in Calendar No. 50, Nov. 8), which will continue to be acted upon, there will be no Text Papers on those days.

2. In the Calendar the *Church Instruction for the Week* will not be continued, but will be printed with a little selection of Psalms and Hymns, which will be arranged before long, so as to be suited to our services in the parish every week. Until, however, this is ready for use, the Church Instruction will still be placed as before in the Calendar for the Sunday morning, that we may not forget the care which the Church takes to teach her members.

3. Besides the other Scriptures appointed by the Church which were marked down last year, the *Psalms for the day* will now be added every Sunday. This is done not only to help you to find them out, but more particularly, that when you are at home, you may turn to them in your Bible. The words in the Prayer-book Psalms are not always exactly the same as those in the Bible Psalms. The Prayer-book Psalms were put into English first, and much more care was afterwards taken by those who put the Bible into English as we have it; so that we may generally say that the Bible Psalms are the better, wherever there is any difference.

4. The epistle for the day has been shortly explained, generally every Sunday afternoon, last year. The *Gospel for the day* shall be explained in the same manner during this year. This, however, will not be the case when the

Sacrament of Baptism is administered ; then, instead of the Gospel for the day, some part of the Baptismal Service will be explained in a short manner, so as to detain the congregation no longer than the time of the usual service. It is very much to be desired that parents would so arrange for the baptism of their children, that they might always be brought on the Sunday after Communion Sunday. This would make things more regular in that respect.

5. It is to be hoped that the *Morning Texts* have been often profitable and comforting to those who have used them. Last year I selected the texts for you ; a change may, perhaps, be useful, and therefore we will begin this year with the first verse of the first Psalm, and go on using a verse, or more, as the subject may require, every morning, but going regularly through each Psalm. This plan may oftentimes bring us instruction or comfort suitable to our daily need, without any previous arrangement ; and those who learn the Morning Texts by heart will find advantage in having them in connected portions. In this, however, the Sunday Morning Text is not to be included, but it will generally be the text of the morning sermon.

6. On *particular days*, on which any thing has formerly occurred which it will be useful or interesting to remember, a note of it will be put into the Calendar ; and mention will also be made of the days appointed to be kept holy by the Church.

7. It will not be necessary at present to give notice of the regular lesson for the children of the Sunday School, as, for some time, they are directed to learn the collect for the day, with the explanation which has been given them.

8. The " Word from the Pastor to his Flock " has been given weekly throughout the last year ; it will not be necessary to continue this every week in future, though there will be

many occasions upon which such a word may be well suited. What I purpose to do, therefore, is to lead you to the study of the Proverbs of Solomon, where the working of our natural hearts on the one hand, and that of divine grace on the other, are shewn to us by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Occasionally a *Proverb*, with a plain explanation, shall be given, when there is no need for a "Word from the Pastor to his Flock." May God send His blessing with this attempt to draw your attention to a portion of His Word which has been much neglected.

9. Besides the Proverb, any *Information* connected with the parish, which I may wish to communicate to you, shall be added. On the week after Communion Sunday the number of Communicants at the last Sacrament will be mentioned, and the sum of money collected before it. Whenever any under sickness or affliction desire that the members of the Church should be asked to pray for them, it shall be stated; and any similar information shall be given.

#### NOTICE ABOUT THE SINGING IN CHURCH.

*Advent Sunday, Nov. 29, 1835.*

Singing the praises of God is one of the appointed means of expressing the earnest feelings of a grateful heart. It has been one of the modes which the people of God have used to shew their devotion, ever since the earliest days of the Church of Christ, both before and after His coming upon earth; and our Lord himself justified us in so doing by his example, when He joined his disciples in singing a hymn, after the appointment of the Holy Sacrament, and before He went into the Garden of Gethsemane. (Matt. xxvi. 30.)

The Church has provided for her members the means of exercising this kind of worship; and in our services in this parish, we avail ourselves of the permission to sing many of



the parts which are adapted for that purpose. This has the effect both of enlivening our devotion, if we sing with understanding of the sense we mean to express (1 Cor. xiv. 15), and also of making a pleasing variety in the course of our lengthened services. Formerly the order of Morning Prayer was used by itself, at an early hour in the day; and afterwards, at another time, the people assembled and joined in the *Litany*, which word means a general supplication, or an earnest applying to God for what we feel that we stand in need of. The Morning Prayer and the Litany have now been joined together into one service; and while this plan is attended with many advantages, it has the inconvenience of lengthening the time, during which the people are upon their knees in prayer without any change of posture. This sometimes wearies those who are not strong, and hinders them from kneeling at all during the earnest petitions of the Litany, which should be always said with the deepest feeling and expression of humility. This inconvenience may be remedied by taking advantage of the rule of the Church, which is put in the Prayer Book immediately after the second collect. *In choirs and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem.* This occurs just where the Litany is appointed to be read. By following this rule therefore, the people would rise after the regular Morning Prayer; and by the singing of an anthem, in which all joined, and by the change of posture, both the mind and the body might be better prepared to enter, with solemn devotion into the sense and feeling of the Litany which follows.

With this view we will begin on this Advent Sunday to act upon this rule of the Church: but as it would not be well to make the whole service any longer than it is at present, we will divide the time of the four verses of a hymn, which are usually sung between the prayers and the Communion Service. A Litany hymn of two verses shall be sung as an

anthem, regularly after the second collect, at the place appointed by the Church; and *only two verses* of a hymn shall be sung after the prayers, while the minister goes to the Communion Table. This plan will not lengthen the time, while it will add to the convenience of the manner of conducting the service.

The following is the hymn which, for the present, we will use before the Litany. All the congregation ought to join in singing it.

### LITANY HYMN.

#### I.

Now to our Advocate on high,  
Sinners who know their need draw nigh,  
In earnest Litany.  
His agony and bloody sweat—  
His passion pay the sinners debt,  
His precious death shall be our plea.

#### II.

Spirit of Christ! to every heart  
Thy promised comfort now impart,  
With power to trust thy word.  
Be to our supplication near;  
O Saviour, deign our prayer to hear;  
Hear, and deliver us, good Lord.

### LVII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

### UPON THE BEGINNING OF A NEW YEAR.

*Advent Sunday, Nov. 27, 1836.*

1. By the goodness of a merciful God, we have passed once more, during another year, through the services and instruc-

tion which the Church has appointed for her members ; and have arrived at another Advent Sunday. Your Pastor has been enabled to carry on the general plan with which he began the year. The Weekly Calendars have been distributed without fail ; Text Papers have been given of nineteen of the sermons which have been preached ; and the ministerial instruction has been, at other times, put before the people in print, so that none can have any excuse for ignorance ; and your minister can feel, that if any one in the parish shall hereafter be condemned for his sins because he follows not the way of salvation by Christ Jesus, it will not be for lack of warning, nor for want of sending that warning to his own abode. This is a very serious thought—very important to the minister, who will have to account for teaching the souls committed to his charge—and very important to the people concerning whom it can be witnessed that this has been done. It is unfortunately too plain, that there is not all the fruit which might have been hoped, from all the good seed of the Word of God which has thus been sown, week after week, from house to house. It is, on the contrary, to be feared, that much spiritual deadness has crept over many, of whom better things might have been expected ; and that many continue in open contempt and rebellion against the Word of God's Holy Spirit. It is the purpose of your Pastor to shew you something of the spiritual state of the parish, by making you acquainted with a few simple facts concerning the numbers of the congregations, and of the attendants on the different means of grace and instruction ; comparing the few past years with the present. This shall be done (if God's good Providence give time and opportunity) in papers which shall occasionally take the place of "The Present Truth ;" and which shall be called "The Pastor's Account." (Heb. xiii. 17.) The object of giving you this account is to stir you all up to a more diligent attention to spiritual things ; that you may "redeem the time

because the days are evil." (Eph. v. 16.) May the blessing of God rest upon the endeavour, and accomplish the object.

2. The arrangement of the *Weekly Calendar* must now be altered. On last Advent Sunday you were told that it was intended to print the Church instruction for the week, together with a selection of psalms and hymns to be used regularly in the church. It has not been found possible to do this hitherto; and therefore the Church instruction has been continued in the Calendar. It is very important that our attention should be drawn to the regular instruction of the Church, which we are so apt to overlook, and thereby to lose its advantage. Therefore, during the course of the next year, it is intended to print the selection of psalms and hymns before spoken of, in weekly portions, together with the Church instruction. These weekly portions must be carefully kept; and, when bound together at the end of the year, they will make a book, which may be called *Worston Church Psalmody*; and which will serve ever afterwards to be used in regular order, in the Services of the Church. To make this book complete, a selection of Daily Texts shall be added every week; each of which will be found to be so connected with the Church Instruction, as that it may be used as a daily means of recollecting the subject, and of making a personal application of it. During the past years, the Morning Texts have been found very useful in continuing, during the week, the remembrance of particular subjects brought forward in the sermon; or in calling the mind to improve any striking circumstances, or any unusual seasons which have occurred. It would not be wise to take away this advantage from those who have hitherto profited by it; and, therefore, whenever proper occasions may occur, *special texts* for those days shall be inserted in the Calendar. Those portions of the Scriptures selected by the Church which vary with the day of the month—that is, the psalms and the second lessons—will be printed

with the Calendar. The others, which are arranged according to the particular Sundays, the Epistles, Gospels, and first lessons, will be found in the "Psalmody."

3. Text Papers will continue to be printed as often as it can conveniently be managed. Your Pastor has given much consideration to the arrangement of such a plan of instruction from the pulpit as shall, under God's blessing, be most likely to render the ordinance of preaching effectual to the great purpose for which it was appointed by Christ. He wishes to render it as interesting to the people as possible; and for this purpose, to vary the mode of instruction as much as may be consistent with the teaching of the same great truths of the Gospel, which never vary. Upon looking back to the past years of his ministry amongst you, he finds that he has left no part of the doctrine of salvation that has not, at one time or another, been laid open to you. Many have neglected, and many have forgotten these instructions; and he judges it, therefore, advisable to preach again to you, occasionally, from the general heads of those discourses by which he taught you six or seven years ago. For this purpose it will not be necessary to give up the course of Sermons on the Types of Christ in the Old Testament, which have proceeded so far; but it may be useful to have some variety in the arrangement of subjects. On the first Sunday in every month there will be, as usual, a Sacramental Exposition before the Communion. On one or two other Sunday mornings the Sermons on the Types will be continued; and on one or two more, the Sermons will be taken from the heads of the former discourses, of which, when it is possible, Text Papers will be given. The Questions, by which the mind may be prepared for the next Sunday's Sermon, will be occasionally inserted during the next year.

4. During the year 1835 a short explanation of the Epistle for the day was given at the Afternoon Service: and during

the year 1836, the same kind of explanation of the Gospel. If it please God, the same kind of plan will be pursued during the year 1837, and a general explanation of the first morning Lesson, or of some important part of it, shall be given at the Sunday Afternoon Service.

5. The reading of the "Pilgrim's Progress" was finished last Sunday, at the Evening Instruction in the school-room. This will afford an opportunity for the beginning of a new course of instruction, on this first day of the Church's arrangement of the year. A subject for such instruction is suggested by the present state of the times. It is very common, in these days, to find evil-disposed men setting forth the greatest falsehoods concerning the Church, and using the most foolish arguments to unsettle the minds of her members. Such persons can only gain their end when the members are ignorant of the true state of the case, and therefore it becomes an important duty in the minister, to give the people proper information upon the subject. The Sunday Evening Instruction shall, for the present, be devoted to this object. You shall first have a plain account of the history of the Church of Christ from the beginning: more particularly you shall be told how the Church was first established in this country; and afterwards, when it became corrupted, how it was reformed. In doing this you shall have the more interesting parts read to you out of the books of history, Fox's book of Martyrs, and others. When you have been instructed in this important history, you shall have an account given to you of the doctrines and rules of the Church; they shall be compared with Scripture, and their truth and reason shall be explained to you. Every member of the Church by attending this course of instruction may be able to give a reason why he is a Churchman; and may God send His blessing upon the teaching, that we may feel more of the comfort of being all of one mind in His house.

6. What has been said concerning the Evening Instruction will enable you better to understand why we should be more earnest in prayer for the Church and her ministers in these times, than ever we have been before. There are four seasons in the year appointed for ordaining ministers, called the Ember weeks. It would be well to take advantage of this appointment of the Church, both for consideration of the duties arising from having an Apostolic Ministry among us, and for prayer for the ministers. For this purpose, on the Wednesday in each of the Ember weeks, the subject of the Evening Lecture shall be taken from the Ordination Service; and also on some morning in the course of that week, your Pastor will afford an opportunity to the people to join him in prayer upon the subject. In the week in which any of those days occur that are appointed by the Church for special instruction by the example of some of the New Testament saints, the subject of the Wednesday Lecture will be that appointed by the Church for the Saint's day. It would be of no avail to have the Morning Service on those days, to give the instruction in the manner intended by the Church; because the circumstances of the parish would allow scarcely any one to attend. By the plan now proposed the same object will be obtained, while the regularity of the week day Lecture will not be altered. Except upon these occasions, or in the Ember weeks, the explanation of the prophecy of Zechariah will be continued at the Wednesday Lecture.

7. Whenever occasion may seem to require it, "the present truth" will be put before you as usual, in "A Word from the Pastor to his Flock;" and, from time to time, you will receive an explanation of a Proverb, as during the past year.



## LVIII.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

*Advent Sunday, 1837-8.*

By the continuing mercy of God we have been preserved through another year, during which we have again joined in His worship according to the form of sound words which we received from our fathers; and we have again followed the course of Scriptural Instruction which is arranged by the Church. We begin to-day afresh the year's services and instruction. During the past year, the different means of grace in the parish have been carried on as before; and attention has been called to them, and to the instruction which has been afforded, by means of the printed papers which have been sent amongst you for nearly five years. It should be a subject of great thankfulness that so much mercy has been shewn us in all these matters. But while your Pastor calls upon you to feel and express your gratitude to God upon this account, it is also his duty to point out how little advantage comparatively has been taken, by many of the flock, of the spiritual helps which have been thus offered. To call your attention to this in a proper way will require more than one week's address to you; and especially as there are many things relating to the ministry, which need some plain dealing, that what is wrong may be put right, and what is neglected may be attended to. Your Pastor intends (if God permit) to take the opportunity of the opening of a new year's course of services, and endeavour to discharge this duty to the people over whom he is appointed;

and therefore, as occasion may serve, the usual "Word" will be employed in this manner.

At present the only subject brought before you shall be some explanation of the plan, which it is intended to pursue upon commencing the Weekly Papers for the sixth year.

1. *The Church Psalmody* has been carried on during the whole of the last year; and a number of hymns for special services or particular occasions having been added, the whole makes a complete volume, suitable for our congregational use for years to come. A copy of each week's hymns has been given regularly to every family. Many of the parishioners have had them bound up, and there are now nearly 150 of these hymn-books in the parish. This book contains the Church Instruction, and appointed Scriptures for each week, to which you would do well constantly to refer. There are also daily texts chosen, which, if referred to every morning, will help you to keep in remembrance the appointed instruction. May God bless this means of assisting our weakness; and may many of you find it useful for this purpose.

2. *The Weekly Calendar* shall be continued as heretofore. We have now tried this means of information for some years, and may therefore be able to profit by past experience in arranging it. The calendar will contain an account beforehand of the instruction intended to be given in the course of the week. The morning text mentioned in it on Sunday mornings, will generally be that of the morning sermon. It is intended that the Sunday morning sermons should be varied in the following manner:—When the Lord's Supper is administered, a Sacramental exposition will be given. The two different courses of sermons which have been already begun, one on the Types of Christ in the Old Testament, and the other in explanation of the Commandments, will be carried on, probably by having one sermon on each in every

month. These subjects would occupy three Sundays out of four; and on the remaining Sunday some general subject will be explained. This variety in the instruction may tend to help our interest in all the subjects. Text Papers will be given of the sermons as often as it can be conveniently arranged to do so.

3. *The Discourses on Sunday afternoons* have been regularly devoted to carry on some part of the appointed instruction of the Church. During one whole year the Gospels were explained; the Epistles during another; and during the last year, the First Morning Lessons (or such part as time would admit of) have been explained. It is intended in the coming year, that some portion of the Second Morning Lesson shall form the subject of instruction in the afternoon.

4. *The Evening Instruction in the School Room* has now been continued for nearly nine years; during which time many important subjects have been brought before the people. The Lectures on the history of the Church have occupied the whole of the last year; and it is to be hoped that the information thus afforded may have been profitably applied by those who have received it. It is intended in future to follow generally the original plan upon which this instruction was given; that is, to explain and enforce more particularly the subject of the Morning Sermon. Though this will be the general object, yet one regular course of instruction will also be carried on from time to time, for the purpose of explaining and applying the several petitions of the *Lord's Prayer*. Notice will be given in the Calendar whenever this subject is intended for the Evening Instruction; and sometimes also it may be considered advisable to take some particular subject unconnected with the morning sermon.

5. One point of the greatest importance to the spiritual

welfare of the people, is a right understanding and due exercise of prayer in private. This point has been very often explained in various ways; and the advantage of having a clear view of the particular subjects upon which we ought to pray, has been laid before you upon a late occasion. Although many persons in this parish unhappily neglect the duty and privilege of prayer upon the general subjects which ought to interest a christian, yet, thanks be to God, there is good reason to hope that some amongst us are desirous of being helped in this matter; it is your Pastor's duty to forward all such good desires, by every means of assistance and instruction. It is therefore intended to choose, every week, some *general subject for prayer*; such as ought to be interesting to those who are desirous of praying. This subject will be inserted in the Calendar; and a very few words will be said upon it at the opening of the Sunday Evening Instruction. The subject ought to occupy the minds of the people in their spare moments; so that the heart should be led up to God in prayer about it, as often as the thought comes to the mind. By this means we may all be encouraged by the merciful promises which God has given to united prayer—and to prayer one for another. There will not be wanting those amongst us who will devote some special portion of time in the week to more particular prayer upon the subject proposed: and if this plan be acted upon by those in the parish, who, through God's grace, have learnt how to pray, a very great blessing may be expected to follow.

6. The year before last it was the custom to put into the Calendar a Morning Text for every day. During the last year such texts were also given, but in a different way. They were chosen for the purpose of carrying on the Church Instruction, and were printed with the hymns. These latter texts have already been mentioned above, and it is very

desirable that every body should make use of them for the purpose proposed. Such persons as are really disposed to act upon the plan for prayer just mentioned, will not however consider it too much to be assisted in their endeavours by some little Scriptural help, sent to them as a message by their minister every day. For the benefit therefore of these persons, a Text of Scripture for every day, will be inserted in the Calendar generally referring to the subject for prayer, or to some other subject which particular circumstances may seem to make it useful to bring before the spiritual people of God amongst us. And as our hymn-book is now complete, and in the hands of the people, it will perhaps be interesting and pleasant to many, to have their minds led still further to the subject, by some verse which it may be easy to remember during the day. On every day therefore such a text, and such a verse of a hymn will be inserted in the Calendar; and may the blessing of God accompany them, imparting much comfort by them to the souls of His people.

7. The Wednesday Lecture is a subject upon which your Pastor has so much to say that he will reserve it for a future opportunity. It is only mentioned here at present for the purpose of informing you of the course of instruction which will in future be given. It should be remembered that during the course of the last nine years, there have been explained the whole of the Gospels—the Epistle to the Romans—the particular instruction appointed for the Saints' days—and the Ordination service. It is now intended to explain the Book of Genesis regularly through, in the same manner as has been done with those other portions of Scripture.

8. There is but one more subject which it is necessary to refer to at present. It has been for some time customary to occupy about an hour every Monday evening, in giving

information respecting Missionaries to the heathen and to the Jews, and in reading to the people monthly portions of the Cottager's Guide. This will be continued, and notice of the appointed subject will be given in the Calendar. It will take place one Monday evening at the school-room, at Wonston, and the next at the Rector's room. On the first Monday evening in each month, the information will be Missionary; on the second, it will relate to the condition of the Jews: on the other Monday evenings in the month, the portions of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament will be read.

May the blessing of God be abundantly given to all these arrangements, that they may be made the means of instruction and comfort to the people, and of promoting the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

## LIX.

THE PASTOR'S ADVENT ADDRESS TO  
HIS FLOCK.*2 Dec. 1838.*

YOUR Pastor has now closed the tenth year of his ministry among you. Such a period cannot fail to call forth many serious considerations. His own mind has been anxiously engaged in considering the account, which he will one day have to render of his ministry, to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls; and he desires, that every one in the flock should also seriously consider, that, whatever may be the judgment passed upon the minister concerning his own shortcomings, yet, each person who has lived under the ministry will be answerable for as much profit as ought to have been gained, whether it be as by five talents, or as by two talents, or as by one talent (see Matt. xxv. 14—30). It is

this year also ;” or at least for so much of the year as under the providence and grace of God he may be enabled. He has determined to continue the weekly papers yet another year (the seventh year of this arrangement, and the eleventh of his ministry amongst you) ; “and if it bear fruit, well ;” if not, the plan can then be given up.

But it is the sincere desire of your Pastor, that by every means the papers may really be made beneficial ; and therefore, as he continues the plan, he will endeavour to increase its means of usefulness—as the fate of the fig-tree in the parable was to be delayed, that new means might be tried to make it fruitful (Luke: xiii. 8). For the same purpose, a new course of papers with increased instruction will begin this Advent, in a form something altered from that of the last years. The first is sent with this, and the usual contents will be as follows ;—

1. The Calendar will be called the “Wonston Pastoral Calendar ;” and the blessing of God is sought by placing a short prayer at the head, which will both serve to produce a prayerful spirit ; and also to remind the flock, that the occasion when this prayer was added was when the little fruit of the former Calendar led us to the only source from whence we can obtain power to bring forth more fruit.

2. Such of the Scriptures appointed by the Church as change (so that they could not be inserted in the hymn-book on each week), will be given every Sunday ; and generally the text of the morning sermon will also be mentioned.

3. It may be well to state here the general course of instruction which is intended to be pursued. On the Communion days (the first Sunday in every month, &c.), a Sacramental Exposition will usually be given, shorter than the sermons, for the convenience of the Communicants, as the service is so much longer on that day. On the other



Sundays, the morning sermon will either carry on the course of instruction on the types (in which we have already proceeded to the 24th sermon); or else the explanation of the commandments (of which the seven first have already been considered); or else the sermon will be on a general subject. A Text Paper shall be given as often as it can conveniently be done.

4. In the afternoon discourse we have already during four years, followed the appointed instruction of the Church, by considering the Gospels, the Epistles, the first and the second morning lessons. The first lesson for the afternoon shall now be explained.

5. The evening instruction in the school-room will be varied in the same manner as it has hitherto been. The explanation of the Lord's Prayer has just closed; and we will this year take the Church Services, and consider their Scriptural character; and the application in our conduct, to which, by the use of them, we bind ourselves. While this is to be the regular course of instruction, it will sometimes be interrupted in order to consider more particularly the subject of the Morning Sermon, or some occasional subject which may be suitable to circumstances.

6. The plan of proposing a subject for special prayer every week shall be continued. Though it may be neglected by many, yet if but a few are led by it to a union and agreement as to what they ask of God, it will give confidence and strength, and bring down a blessing (Matt. xviii. 19.).

7. A Christian requires as much help in the duty of self-examination, as he does in the duty of prayer; and your Pastor intends to propose to you a simple question, to be continually pressed home to your consciences during the course of each week. If you make use of this question in the manner intended, and especially with prayer, it may be

made the means of bringing you all more humbly to God, to seek the benefits of the atonement of Christ.

8. The Minister's Message will be continued. It is intended to be a special means of spiritual and scriptural intercourse between the minister and his people, day by day; and should be taken as a word of exhortation or encouragement particularly addressed by your Pastor to each of you. The verse of a hymn which is added, was last year applicable to the Scripture in the message; this year it will usually be taken from the hymns sung that week in the Church Services.

9. The Calendar will regularly announce the different means of instruction, &c. which are afforded; so that no person in the parish can plead ignorance of the assistance which may be obtained, whatever other excuse they may make for not attending them.

10. These different helps are so well known by this time in the Parish, that it will be only necessary to say a few words concerning some of them. The Monday evening meetings will be alternately at Wonston and at Sutton. The first Monday in the month, Missionary information will usually be read; information concerning the Jews on the second; and some portions of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, (generally those which are to come forth in the next month) will be read on the remaining Monday evenings. At the Wednesday Lecture the book of Genesis is in course of explanation, and the progress already made extends to chap. vi. 12.

11. The Calendar will occupy one page; and a second page will be given with it, which will be divided into three portions; the first containing "the Help to Faith;" the second "the Help to Practice;" and the third "Notices and Information." These will require some explanation.

12. The *Help to Faith* is intended to confirm our belief in the great doctrines of Christianity, by pointing out the

Scriptures where those doctrines are found. For this purpose your Pastor intends to take *the Creed* in the first place; and go through every article, merely placing under each head, the references to such Scriptures as prove that the doctrine is taken from the Bible. A short portion of this is intended to be given each week to occupy you all during the week, in turning over your Bibles in an intelligent and interesting way.

13. To vary this a little, a *help to practice* is added. This will be a very short word of explanation and application of some text, usually taken from some part of the appointed Church instruction for the Lord's day.

14. Whenever any *notices* are required, such as have been usually given, or any *information* which it may be well to afford you, it shall occupy the third portion of the second page. Perhaps this information may occasionally relate to matters which ought to interest you, though they may not belong to our own parish concerns. Sometimes this part of the page will be filled up with *preparatory questions*, whenever it may be considered useful to induce you to think beforehand of the subject of the sermon intended for the following Sunday morning.

There are yet several things which remain to be said; and especially, the subject mentioned in the 'Word' of last Sunday, which was intended to be brought forward to-day—*the education of your children*. This address is however too long already for one week's reading, and therefore that important subject will be brought forward next week, if God will. Your Pastor therefore, will only call your attention now to two points relating to the administration of the Sacraments,—

First, as regards the administering of the Sacrament of Baptism. It is very inconvenient, for several reasons, that no fixed time should be arranged for that Holy Sacrament; it is desirable that one Sunday in each month should be set apart

for that purpose, as is the case with respect to the other Sacrament. Your Pastor therefore requests, that it may be understood in the parish as a rule, that the second Sunday in each month shall be, in future, the Baptism Sunday: and that, whenever there are any children to be baptized, they are to be brought to Church at the afternoon Service on that Sunday; (due notice having been previously given for that purpose). This is to be the general plan; but, as the matter is left by the rules of the Church, to the discretion of the Minister; he will be willing to consider any particular circumstances, and to appoint some other Sunday, if any occasion should seem to require it.

Secondly, as regards the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The Church especially requires, that "*so many as intend to be partakers of the Holy Communion shall signify their names to the Curate, at least sometime the day before.*" The reasons for this are stated in the Prayer Book, in the Rubric before the communion service. In a small country parish, it would not be necessary to enforce this rule every time each of the Communicants attend the Lord's Table; yet, it would be extremely convenient, that, whenever any person attends the Communion *for the first time*, they should act upon this rule, and inform the Minister of their intention beforehand. Your Pastor does not mean to say, that he would refuse the Communion to those who neglect this law of the Church (which however he might do if he judged it proper); but he requests that every person in the parish will remember this rule. The principle of the Church, and the nature of the pastoral office, are too well known in the parish for it to be supposed, that this is meant to deter any one from communicating; on the contrary, all are invited to come to the Minister, that they may be instructed how to *judge themselves*, "and be received as worthy partakers of that Holy Table."

## LX.

## EXPLANATION OF THE NEW SERIES

## OF THE WONSTON PASTORAL CALENDAR,

FOR THE YEAR 1840.

*The contents of the Wonston Pastoral Calendar may be divided into four heads.—*

I. *Notices of the Services* and means of grace and instruction, by which the people are not only informed of the time of attendance; but also, they may gather some idea of the several subjects, in order to prepare their minds by thought beforehand.

1. The text of the Sunday Morning Sermon will be given. 2. The subject for the Afternoon Discourse. 3. The subject of the Evening Instruction in the school-room. 4. The subject of the Information, given under the direction of the minister, on Monday evenings. 5. The Scripture to be explained at the Week-day Lecture. 6. The Scripture for the Cottage Reading. When these subjects are not mentioned, it is because it is probable that the service will not be conducted by the Rector himself.

It may be useful to give some general understanding of the arrangements proposed for conducting each of these several means of grace.

1. The *Sunday Morning Sermons* are at present carrying on a course of explanation of the Message of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven to the Church, as contained in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Revelation. While this may be considered as the regular subject, other subjects will be treated as occasion may require; and the course postponed for that

purpose, to be afterwards renewed till it is finished. On the mornings when the Communion is to be administered, some portion of Scripture will be shortly considered as a Sacramental Exposition, instead of the usual Sermon.

2. The *Afternoon Discourse* will be an explanation of the subject of the Collects during the whole year.

3. The *Evening Instruction* in the School-room will be principally devoted to a consideration of Scripture Characters. But when occasions occur for particular subjects, this general course will be postponed; as also when it may be considered proper further to enforce and explain the subject of the Morning Sermon.

4. The Information given on *Monday Evenings* will be some Missionary information on the first Monday in each month; Information relating to the Jews on the second Monday in the month; and the remaining Mondays will be occupied in reading those portions of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament which are contained in the number to be sent round the parish in the following month.

5. The *Week-day Lecture* will in future be on Thursday evenings. The subjects will be alternately a portion of the book of Genesis, and a portion of the Acts of the Apostles, until the whole of those books shall have been explained. On the Thursday previous to the administration of the Lord's Supper, the lecture will be upon a Sacramental subject, and will stand in the place of the customary Sacramental Meeting. Persons who desire to communicate for the first time, or those who have any occasion to ask advice upon the subject of their communicating, may find it convenient to speak to the Minister after this Sacramental Lecture; unless they prefer calling at the Rectory half an hour before it begins. None however need be deterred if they find it inconvenient to attend at these times; for the Minister may be seen by any of his people, at whatever time they may wish to speak with him.

The *Cottage Reading* in the Infants' School-room at Sutton will usually take place on Wednesdays; but the minister does not feel it necessary to give this every week, or to fix it certainly upon the same day. On whatever day notice is given in the Calendar of a Cottage Reading, on that day will be the usual half-holiday for the children of the Infants' School. On that day also every person may take advantage of the minister's being at Sutton to speak with him, in case they have any thing that they wish to say. This is merely mentioned for the convenience of the people; because the Rector is ready to receive all persons who come to the Rectory to see him, at whatever time they may call. The portion of Scripture at present being explained at the Cottage Reading is the First Epistle to the Thessalonians.

II. *Special help and instruction* upon three points of importance; that is to say, Prayer, Self-examination, and Scriptural knowledge.

1. A subject will be proposed for prayer every week. As a regular course, the several petitions of the Litany will be taken in order; but this course will be interrupted whenever any circumstance, or present subject of instruction, seems to suggest a particular object for prayer.

2. Self-examination is so important and so difficult a duty, that every week some questions will be suggested, which should be seriously and faithfully applied by each person to his own heart. There will be a general course of questions, which at the end will form a complete system of self-examination. These questions will be regularly numbered. But this course will be interrupted as often as any particular circumstance or instruction makes it desirable to apply some special questions at the time. These occasional questions will not be numbered. Besides this there will be a second course of questions, adapted to a preparation for the Lord's Supper: these will be regularly given on the week before the Commu-



nion, and will be numbered separately as the Sacramental self-examination; the whole course when finished will form a complete system of examination of the heart, in preparation for partaking of the Lord's Supper.

3. A complete system of Scriptural knowledge will be given in weekly portions consisting of two parts. First, a knowledge of the Gospel history; and secondly, a knowledge of the Gospel doctrines.

(1) The Gospel history, taken out of the four Gospels, according to the order in which every thing happened, will be given, by stating every week such Scriptures as contain a small portion, one after another. These will exactly agree with the portions of the Cottager's guide to the New Testament (as far as that work has gone); and by being read weekly in this manner, will convey to the mind a clear knowledge of our Lord's History.

(2) The Gospel doctrines, as far as they are applicable and necessary for each Christian, are put forth by the Church for her members in the Catechism. Accordingly the exact order of the Church Catechism shall be followed; and every week a few Catechism Questions shall be suggested, which will lead those who attend to them to understand better the doctrine brought forward in the Catechism which they have learned. The children at the school will be taught to answer these questions.

III. *A Daily Message* from the Pastor to his flock. This will consist of a text of Scripture chosen by the minister, in order specially to apply it to his people, on each day; together with a verse of a hymn. As on Sunday, the text of the morning sermon will be given, that will be the Minister's Message for the Lord's day, which all may come and hear him explain. On the other six days the messages will refer to particular subjects.

1. There will be a promise chosen from God's Word, for

God's people. 2. There will be a message which has reference to the Subject for Prayer. 3. One which has reference to the questions for Self-examination. 4. One which has reference to the Scripture knowledge given in that week. 5. One message will refer to the Sunday morning sermon; or to some particular circumstance of general interest in the parish. 6. And one will lead the mind to expect the subject for the next Sunday morning sermon.

In the Minister's Daily Message, the verses of the hymns must be numbered; and the numbers marked in the *first* edition will be used, as the most of the parishioners have those hymn-books. Persons who purchase the second edition are recommended to write over the printed number that other number by which the same hymn is marked in the first edition.

IV. *General Notices* upon subjects that it may be proper to be informed about in the parish; such as the following:—

1. The Sunday School regular lesson for the next week.
2. The attendance at the Sunday School the week before; together with the number of children that have not learned the regular lesson.
3. The account of the money found in the charity boxes at the church door.
4. The amount of the Collections which may be made after charity sermons in the church.
5. The accounts of the 'Friendly Help Society.'
6. The accounts of money collected in the parish for Missionary objects.
7. The time when a number of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, or any general address, is sent round the parish.
8. The Monthly Church Communion Account, which will be inserted in the week after every communion; and all other

notices will be postponed, if necessary, to make room for this.

The 'Wonston Pastoral Calendar' is intended to be printed regularly every week. Besides this, however, as occasion may require, and as circumstances may permit, it is intended from time to time to distribute instruction in the following manner—

1. Text Papers of the Sermons.
2. Scripture remembrances of the Scripture Looking-glass.
3. A Word from the Pastor to his Flock, when any thing seems to call it forth.
4. A Chapter of the Pastor's Account.
5. Small Tracts.

Whenever it is found convenient to print these, they will be sent to all those families who have expressed their desire to have the Pastoral Calendar, and none other.

Besides these there will be distributed—

6. Monthly Numbers of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament.
7. Occasional General Addresses to all the inhabitants of the Parish.

These will be sent to every house in the Parish.

## LXI.

### PLAIN FACTS

*Which ought to be interesting to the Inhabitants of the Parish of Wonston.*

#### I. FACTS TO BEGIN WITH, TO BE ABLE TO JUDGE OF THE FACTS WHICH FOLLOW.

1. There are 754 people living in the parish of Wonston ; men, women, and children ; without including accidental

lodgers. 480 are over the age of fifteen years; 226 are between the ages of two and a half and fifteen; and forty-eight are infants, under two years and a half old.

2. There are 151 houses in the parish.

## II. FACTS TAKEN FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS.

The following Facts relate to the eleven years during which the present Rector has had the charge of the Parish; that is, from the beginning of 1829, to the end of 1839.

3. The number of persons who have died in the parish has been 136; which is more than one out of every six of the inhabitants. Of these, thirty-five have been under five years old; forty-four from five to fifty years old; twenty-eight from fifty to seventy; and twenty-nine above seventy.

4. Taking one year with another, twelve have died every year; and the greatest proportion has been of those from five to fifty years old. The average has been three under five; four from five to fifty; two and a half from fifty to seventy; and two and a half above seventy, every year.

5. The number of persons who have died suddenly (that is, without any warning of illness at all, or with only a few days illness) has been fourteen.

6. There have been funerals out of eighty-one different houses, which leaves only seventy families in the parish where there have been no funerals. But twenty-five of these families are near relations to those in which the funerals have taken place; so that there are only forty-five houses in the whole parish which have not been visited by death during the last eleven years. Besides these there have been sixteen funerals of persons connected with families in the parish, but who lived and died at a distance: making 152 funerals in all.

7. There have been 238 children baptized in the parish.

8. Of these sixteen were the fruits of sin, and brought shame upon their unmarried parents:

### III. FACTS ABOUT THE CHURCH.

#### CONCERNING COMMUNION.

9. During the eleven years, 378 different persons have joined the Communion of the Church. Of these thirty-eight have died, and 118 have left the parish.

10. On the 1st of January 1840, there are only 154 members in Communion with the Church in the parish.

11. There are sixty-four persons living in the parish who have formerly been Communicants, but have given up attendance at the Lord's Table.

12. Of these, no less than twenty have declined during the last year (1839), having each been communicants during the previous year.

13. There are thirty-three houses in the parish in which every inhabitant, who is of proper age, is in Communion with the Church. Twenty-two houses in which the heads of the families are Communicants. Seventeen houses in which the wives are Communicants; and six houses in which some persons communicate, although the heads of the family do not: making altogether seventy-eight families in which there are Communicants.

14. There are seventy-three houses in the parish in which no inhabitant is in Communion with the Church.

15. Of the Communicants last year, twenty-three attended the Lord's Table only once; and thirteen only twice; making thirty-six persons who did not fully comply with the least that the Church requires of her members on this head.

16. Of the remaining 118 persons who communicated regularly, twenty attended three times; twenty-four four times; ten five times; seventeen six times; six seven times; eleven eight times; six nine times; two ten times; four eleven times;

eight twelve times; one thirteen times; five fourteen times; and four fifteen times; the whole number of Communion being fifteen.

#### CONCERNING CONFIRMATION.

17. There are 102 persons in the parish who, having been baptized in their infancy, have neglected to confirm their baptismal profession. Of these thirty have neglected three opportunities during the last eleven years; eighteen have neglected two opportunities; and fifty-four have neglected one opportunity, though they have all been invited each time.

#### CONCERNING DIVINE WORSHIP.

18. There are about 102 in the parish above fifteen years of age who either never attend divine worship at all, or who come to Church very seldom indeed, without making any excuse that they are Dissenters: besides ten persons who never attend Church because they are Dissenters.

19. There are about eighty-seven persons above fifteen years old who come to Church occasionally, but irregularly.

20. The average numbers of the adult congregations on the Lord's day (besides children) taking one Sunday with another throughout the year 1839, have been as follows—166 at the Morning Service; 103 at the Afternoon Service; and 76 at the Evening Instruction.

21. The number of persons who have attended the Week-day Lecture during the year 1839, taking one week with another, has been thirty-three.

#### IV. FACTS ABOUT THE SCHOOLS.

22. There have been just 451 children who have received instruction in the Schools (National, Infants', and Sunday) during the last eleven years, and have gone forth to their occupations in life.

23. There are besides fifty children at present in the Infants' School; and fifty-five children in the National School; making together 105. Of these thirty-one are too young to attend the Sunday School, which contains 110 children: so that twenty-six belong to the Sunday School who are not in the Daily Schools: and the whole number of children under education in the three schools is 131.

## V. FACTS ABOUT THE INSTRUCTION.

### CONCERNING THE MORE PRIVATE TEACHING.

24. There are, at least, thirty-two persons who cannot read in the parish.

25. There are, at least, one Bible and one Prayer Book in every house in the parish, (except in the case in which no person in the family can read.)

26. There was an Adult School for some years, for the purpose of teaching grown up people to read; which was discontinued because there was not a sufficient attendance: though several of those who came had learned so much, as to be able to read the Scriptures.

27. There have been a class for lads, and a class for young women three times begun, and three times discontinued for want of regular attendance.

28. A number of religious tracts, too great to be regularly counted, have been circulated and read in the parish, as well as many books in the Village Library.

29. Printed instructions of various kinds, amounting to 1101 pages, have been given without expense to every family in the parish during the last seven years; besides the Cot-tager's Guide to the New Testament, fifty-seven numbers of which, being 952 pages, have been given to every family; making 2053 printed pages of particular instruction, which



have been placed in each house in the parish, whether they were read or not.

#### CONCERNING THE PUBLIC TEACHING.

30. There have been 1633 different sermons preached publicly during the last eleven years. Of these 608 have been at the Morning Service; 594 at the Second Service in the Church; and 431 at the Weekly Lecture. Of these sermons 116 have been arranged as Text Papers, and sent round to every house in the parish. Besides this, 440 Lectures have been delivered at the Instruction given on Sunday evenings (or afternoons) at the school-room, making in all 2073 different sermons.

31. In the course of these sermons, the following important portions of Scripture have been fully explained. The whole of the four Gospels in harmony; the Epistle to the Romans; the prophecy of Zechariah; the first twenty chapters of Genesis; the course of Scriptures appointed by the Church, including the Gospels and Epistles, the first and second lessons for the Sunday morning, and the first lesson for the Sunday afternoon; besides many other considerable portions of the Word of God. Explanations have also been given of the Church services, and also a particular history of the Church of Christ.

These thirty-one facts are placed before the people of Wonston, at the beginning of the new course of Pastoral Calendars and other papers. Every person would do well to consider each different fact attentively, and try to discover how it concerns himself. Each of these facts will probably be referred to in some future addresses from the Pastor to his Flock. May the consideration of them lead all to more prayer to God, that He may give the increase more abundantly. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

## LXII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

17 April, 1836.

ON this Sunday, in the last year, your attention was called to the warnings which God is continually giving to us, by means of the deaths of those around us; and it happens that we are called, in a striking manner, to consider the same subject to-day. One of the members of the Church has been taken in a moment, from the midst of us, by the providence of God. God speaks so often, and so plainly, to teach us the same lesson, that it is wonderful His voice is so little attended to. You have many times had these warnings put into words, and you have been kept informed, continually, of the uncertainty of your own lives, by an account of the deaths that have taken place in the parish. That your minister may discharge faithfully the duty committed to him (Ezek. xxxiii. 1-9.), he desires to continue to make these warnings plain, "whether the people will hear, or whether they will forbear;" in the earnest hope, that the Holy Spirit may mercifully employ the statements of His dealings amongst us, to make many hearts ready, if God should see fit to send for them suddenly. (Mark xiii. 35-37; Luke xiii. 1-5.)

In the year 1835, just past, there were twenty burials;—two of these were of the bodies of persons brought from other parishes; so that eighteen of our fellow parishioners died in that year. Of these seven were infants, and four were persons in ripe old age; the other seven were persons in the full strength of their life.

Perhaps it may tend to make the great uncertainty of life

appear more plainly, if you see an account of the burials which have taken place in the parish, for the last seven years. The account is as follows :—

| In the year. | DIED | Infants. | In the strength of life. | aged.    | altogether. |
|--------------|------|----------|--------------------------|----------|-------------|
| 1829.        | ..   | 3        | 4                        | 2        | 9           |
| 1830.        | ..   | 4        | 1                        | 3        | 8           |
| 1831.        | ..   | 9        | 2                        | 7        | 18          |
| 1832.        | ..   | 2        | 8                        | 2        | 12          |
| 1833.        | ..   | 7        | 10                       | 7        | 24          |
| 1834.        | ..   | 0        | 4                        | 4        | 8           |
| 1835.        | ..   | 7        | 8                        | 5        | 20          |
|              |      | <hr/> 32 | <hr/> 37                 | <hr/> 30 | <hr/> 99    |

Three have died in this year. These will make 102 persons who have been buried since I have been appointed your minister. Of these thirteen were brought from other parishes, which leaves eighty-nine of our own parishioners.

Mark well, that more people have died in the strength of their life, than either infants, or aged persons.

### LXIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR

### TO THE POORER MEMBERS OF HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

It has been a subject of much anxious thought with many of your friends, how to afford the best relief in their power, whenever the poorer amongst you happen to be placed, by the providence of God, in circumstances of trouble and affliction. The changes that have taken place in the law of the land concerning parish relief, must, no doubt, have an effect upon some of you. The general effect of the new

Poor law will be very useful to yourselves, when time enough has been allowed for it to work ; but no wonder if some distress is occasioned in passing from an old and bad way of going on, to a new and better one. The more a man is able to depend upon his own means, the more comfortable he will be : any plan therefore that puts a man in the way of helping himself is doing him a great service ; and very soon the poor will want such a service done to them, to put them in the way of getting advice and medicine when they are sick ; for, according to the new law, nobody is to have the advice of the Parish doctor when ill, but those who would be forced to apply to the Overseer for relief when they are well. When this law comes completely into force it is likely enough, for some time, to distress a good many poor folks in illness ; and any proper plan by which this could be avoided would be of much service to them. Such a plan is proposed to you now, under the name of '*The Wonston Health Union* ;' which is a sort of club, in which the members are to pay a very small sum ; and, whenever they or their families are ill, they are to have medical help of every kind necessary, and all medicines free of expence.

The rules of the 'Health Union' will be distributed with this ; but it may be as well to point out to you some of the reasons why you ought to take advantage of it by becoming members. When a man feels himself ill, (or his wife, or any of his children) if he cannot get the parish doctor free of expence, he is very loth to go to ask advice, because he knows that he shall have to pay for it, which he can ill afford. He therefore puts it off from day to day. If he happens to feel a little better one day, he hopes his illness may pass off ; but he gets worse and worse, until at last he is forced to take to his bed, and to send for the doctor. He has a severe fit of illness to go through perhaps, when a little advice and proper

medicine in time, might have made him well at the beginning. Then comes the doctor's bill, which the poor man feels to be just and proper; but which he also feels that he has no power to pay. The burthen of debt weighs down his spirits, and makes him unhappy, as well it may. If he is sick again, he is ashamed to go to the doctor to whom he has not paid his due. To feel also that he owes already what he cannot pay is very apt to harden him, so that he does not care how much more he owes; and thus it is that a debt, brought on by misfortune in the beginning, changes in the end a man's character as well as his temper; and leads him by degrees to be dishonest as well as unhappy. Any one, man or woman, who becomes a member of the 'Wonston Health Union' may consider himself safe from the course of things too often arising in this way. By a small regular payment he obtains the right of applying to the doctor whenever he, or any of his family, feels ill. There is no reason for delay, and therefore he may seek advice in time, and perhaps save himself an illness. And should it even please God that an illness does come on, he will be attended to, during the course of it, be it ever so long; and at the end he has no bill to pay, no debt to burthen his conscience. Surely this must be a good plan.

Persons who are members of the 'Wonston Friendly Society' have already the advantage of a surgeon's advice, paid from the funds: but this is only for attendance when they themselves are sick; the society's surgeon is not bound to attend their wives and children, when they are ill. This makes it almost as advantageous to such persons as to others to join the 'Health Union.' As the sum to be paid is so small it may be spared with little inconvenience, especially if what is paid to the Union be saved from the public-house, or from some idle expence in which many indulge to the injury of their health, instead of its preservation. Married women whose

husbands are members, will be entitled to the necessary assistance in their confinements, upon paying less money than would be required if they themselves had to pay the doctor for the same service. These are some of the advantages of the plan. If any person wishes for further explanation respecting it, he is welcome to come to me and make his enquiries, which shall be answered freely and fully.

So far the plan puts it into your power to help yourselves: but there is another society formed in the parish, the object of which is to enable your friends to help you in sickness or distress. This society is called '*The Wonston Friendly Help Society.*' Your masters have readily and kindly come forward to join it. You are welcome to read the rules of it, which are also distributed with this. You will see the subscribers names, who have already contributed more than sixteen pounds. Other persons in the parish and connected with it will be applied to; and when their answers are known, another list of all the subscribers shall be sent to you. The Sacrament money is always divided; half is left in the hands of the Rector; and the other half is parted between the two church-wardens: it is to be given away at the discretion of each of these three persons. Upon the establishment of the 'Friendly Help Society,' the Rector and both the church-wardens have agreed each to give half his portion to its funds. By these and other means, we hope to get a sum of money every year, which may afford important help to the sick, the afflicted, and the aged: and the members of the committee will kindly and constantly endeavour to find out their wants, that they may relieve them, as far as the funds will permit. It is the duty of the poor to be thankful that God has put such intentions into the hearts of those above them, and to pray that the subscribers may find a blessing for themselves in thus trying to help their neighbours. Those amongst you who take

advantage of that part of the plan which enables you to help yourselves, will shew that they are most deserving of that help in their time of need which their friends are willing to give.

All persons desirous of becoming members of the 'Wonston Health Union' may, for the present, give their names to the Rector, or to any of the subscribers of the 'Friendly Help Society.' They will afterwards be informed of the day when the committee will have their first meeting, to admit members.

#### LXIV.

### THE WONSTON HEALTH UNION.

ESTABLISHED the 1st of OCTOBER, 1836.

#### RULES.

1. THE object of this Union is to secure the advantage of medical assistance in sickness to all its members. Any person dwelling in the parishes of Wonston, Hunton, Bullington, Stoke Charity, and Barton Stacey, may be members; except those who themselves earn twenty shillings a week by their work or trade, or the earnings of whose family (including the children under eighteen years of age) amount to thirty shillings a week.

2. Every member who is a single person, man or woman, shall pay three shillings a year, or three pence a month.

Every married couple without children, or every widow or widower with children, shall pay four shillings a year, or four pence a month.

Every married couple with children shall pay five shillings a year, or five pence a month.

3. Children over eighteen years of age shall not be in-



cluded in the subscription for the family, but must subscribe for themselves.

4. Every person, immediately upon becoming a member, shall be entitled to receive medical attendance, advice, and medicine, free of all expence, whenever themselves, or any of their family are ill, (according to Rule 2) including all accidents and surgical cases; but not including women's confinements.

5. Every married women who is a member will be entitled to receive all necessary medical attendance and medicine during her confinement, &c. upon paying eight shillings. This money may be paid at once, or in six monthly portions of one shilling and four pence each, any time before her lying in. Should the member pay this money, or any portion of it, and not afterwards require any medical attendance, the sum paid will be returned to her.

6. Every member shall pay one shilling entrance upon admission; and at the same time shall decide at what period the subscription is to be paid; either monthly, quarterly, half-yearly, or yearly. The members shall make one payment in advance, and the payments shall be made regularly afterwards, at the periods chosen. A fine of two-pence shall be paid for each quarter of a year's delay in making any payment. After a quarter of a year's delay the member shall not receive medical advice, &c. till the money is paid, together with the fine; and after one year's delay, the person shall cease to be a member.

7. No person shall be admitted members at the time they are actually sick, unless they pay the amount of two whole year's subscription, besides the regular payments.

8. No persons who are in the habit of getting drunk, or are notoriously given to profligate or disorderly habits, shall be admitted members, or allowed to continue members if they have been admitted.

9. The money shall be received by the Treasurer; and an account shall be kept, which shall be shewn every half-year to the committee of the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society,' by whom the members will be admitted, at their monthly meetings.

10. The amount of the member's contributions shall be paid over to the surgeon for his attendance, &c. and all money for entrance and fines shall be given to the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society.'

## LXV.

### THE

## WONSTON FRIENDLY HELP SOCIETY.

ESTABLISHED 1st of OCTOBER. 1836.

### RULES.

1. THE object of this Society is to afford timely assistance to the deserving poor of the parish of Wonston, during sickness or other afflictions, and in the infirmities of old age.

2. Subscriptions and donations shall be solicited for this Society; and all persons who subscribe annually seven shillings or upwards, shall be members of the committee.

3. The Society shall be managed and conducted by the committee, with the Rector as their chairman.

4. Such members of the committee as are willing to assist the Society, by visiting the poor, and are able to afford the time, shall put their names upon a list for that purpose; and the members on this list shall take their turns in visiting the different districts of the parish, for the purposes of the Society.

5. The committee shall meet once a month at the Rector's room at Sutton Scotney, where the visitors shall make their report—the turns of visiting shall be arranged—members

shall be admitted into the 'Health Union'—and the other business of the Society shall be transacted.

6. A charity sermon shall be preached once a year, and a collection made after it, for the benefit of the Society.

7. The duty of the Society's visitors shall be to visit the poor in the district assigned to each, for the purpose of ascertaining any case of real distress—to acquaint the Rector and the committee of any extraordinary case that requires greater attention and relief—to collect the contributions of the members of the 'Health Union,' &c. &c.

8. In fulfilling this duty, the power of relief to a certain amount shall be at the disposal of each visitor, to be given in certain articles to the sick or afflicted, and aged; and they shall submit, at the next committee, any recommendation they may think proper to make, for relief in money for any particular purpose.

## LXVI.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

23 Oct. 1836.

THE plan for the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society' being now completed, the first committee meeting will take place on Wednesday in this week (see the Calendar). Those persons who desire to take advantage of the 'Health Union' must attend at this committee meeting, and give their names. If they cannot make it convenient to do this, they may send any friend to speak for them; or they may mention their wishes to any member of the committee. If any persons want information upon the subject, or any explanation, they can obtain it by coming at the same time. A good many

names have already been given to the different members of the committee, but as there will not be another meeting until the last Wednesday in November, every body had better take advantage of the present time, lest sickness should come upon them in the course of the next month.

Several persons in the 'parish, beside those mentioned in the last list, have become subscribers to the 'Friendly Help Society.' A complete list will afterwards be printed, together with the rules, on a single sheet, that any of you who like may put it up in your cottages.

On the beginning of these Societies, which are intended for your benefit, and for the supply of your wants, you are all called upon to consider the morning texts for Wednesday : —and, remembering that no Society can prosper "except the Lord build" it, and that no friends however watchful for your benefit can do you any real good "except the Lord keep" you ; you should earnestly pray that the Lord's blessing may accompany these Societies, and then they will have success indeed.

## LXVII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

30 Oct. 1836.

THE Committee of the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society' have met together, and arranged their plan of proceeding to fulfil the object for which the funds have been subscribed. It is very pleasing to find that many persons have taken advantage of the 'Health Union ;' and it is to be hoped that those who have not yet joined it will avail themselves of it without delay, lest sickness should

in the winter season that is coming, and they should be left to pay the doctor's bill for themselves.

One of the rules of the 'Health Union' is, that no person shall be admitted at the time they are sick, unless they pay the amount of two whole years' subscription, besides the regular payments; but the committee have agreed, that this rule shall not begin till after the month of November, on purpose to give those who are now sick an opportunity of becoming members at the beginning of the Union. From the 1st of December, however, no person will be admitted if actually sick, except according to the rule; and you are all informed of this now, that none may have cause of complaint, if they should be refused hereafter.

The number of members admitted on Wednesday last was eighty-five; of which seventy-two were members for their whole families; and thirteen were single persons. Fifty-eight of the members are in this parish; twenty-three are in Bullington, and four in Stoke Charity.

As the entrance money of the members in Wonston is paid to the 'Friendly Help Society,' to help to do good to their fellow-parishioners that are in distress, the committee resolved, that the entrance money of members in other parishes shall always be placed in the hands of the clergyman of the place where the member comes from, to be applied by him to the same use in his own parish. Accordingly one pound three shillings will be sent to the clergyman of Bullington, for the relief of the sick and afflicted—four shillings to the clergyman of Stoke Charity, for the same purpose—and two pounds eighteen shillings has been paid to the funds of the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society,' on this account.

The committee will meet on the last Wednesday in every month; but any person who desires to join the 'Health Union,' need not wait until that day, but may give his name to any of the committee, who are authorized to receive the money; and

the person becomes a member from the day he makes the payment. The rules being now settled and arranged, they will shortly be printed on a large sheet of paper, and distributed to every house in the parish.

The members of the committee have kindly undertaken the duty of visiting the poor in this parish, for the purpose of employing the funds of the society, in relieving the distress accompanying those sicknesses and afflictions with which the Providence of God may see fit to try any of the people. You should all remember that while it is the Providence of God which sends the troubles of life for wise purposes (as has been often explained to you), it is the mercy of the same God that puts it into the hearts of others to bring some help in the time of need; and it is to Him you must look, both as the God who chastens whom He loves, and who also puts good desires into the hearts of men, and enables them to bring the same to good effect. From Him comes the power to will and to do any good work; and to Him be the glory for every good work that is done.

#### LXVIII.

### A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

29 Jan. 1837.

THE general illness in the parish, which extended to your Pastor, and to the persons employed in printing the papers usually sent weekly round the parish, prevented the possibility of any Calendar, &c. being sent to you last week. Through the goodness of God there has been some improvement, though so many are still suffering that it would not have been wise to have either the instruction in the school-room on Sunday, or the usual week-day service.

One of the great distinctions between those who are really under the power of religion and those who are not, is that the truly religious are ever ready to acknowledge God's hand in all the circumstances of life, whether small or great, while the others are satisfied without carrying the causes of things so far as to God; only considering what immediately produces them. Whatever may be the immediate cause of the distressing complaint, from which thousands of persons in this country are at present suffering, it is assuredly sent from God; and he has assuredly a purpose in sending it. It becomes us all to "hear the rod and Him who hath appointed it" (Micah vi. 9), and to seek to know "wherefore he contendeth with us." (Job. x. 2.) A sense of the sinfulness of sin before God, and a reasonable knowledge of our own hearts, will soon lead us to understand that there is occasion enough for much more severe visitations from a holy God, than that which is at present upon us; and we shall learn to wonder at the gentleness with which we are chastened. That great weakness and sense of helplessness which is one of the consequences of the disease, should excite us to feel more of our spiritual helplessness and weakness in serving God, and should lead us to humble ourselves before Him, and seek to have more of His Spirit, who is the strength of the life of all who turn to Him.

The illness which has laid so many of the people of this parish upon their beds, has been felt much more severely in other parts of the country. In some places many have died from it; and elderly people have generally been unable to bear the attack. It might have been expected that the same effect would have been produced here; but it has pleased God to spare yet awhile all the aged people who have been attacked. This is a great reason why persons, who are feeling the weakness of increasing years, should shew greater diligence in making their "calling and election sure;" since God



has let them alone this time also, that they may bring forth more fruit to His glory in their remaining lives.

But while the Providence of God has restrained the power of death hitherto amongst those who have been affected with the complaint, and has dealt more gently with the aged in this parish than in most other places, He has been pleased to shew us how near death is to every one of us, whether in sickness or in health, by the fatal accident which has in a moment called away the souls of two boys, both of whom belonged to the Sunday School. This afflicting circumstance must not be passed over without serious consideration; and it may well serve to quicken us all in that diligence to which you have been just now exhorted. If there is any class of persons in the parish to whom a more especial warning is needful it is surely the lads, a little above the age of those boys who have been suddenly killed. If there is any duty more difficult, or more especially necessary than another, it is surely the duty of fathers to strive their very utmost in directing and restraining the waywardness of their children, at the age when they first begin to feel a sense of independence; which, in this parish, they do very long before they ought to feel it. To both these points the present warning of God is especially adapted. It ought to alarm the wayward youths with a sense of the danger of being cut off suddenly in rebellion and sin; and it ought to stir up the parents of all such to be more earnest and more prayerful in doing their very utmost to bring their children up in the fear of God. May this blessed effect be produced in both ways by God's Spirit working with His warning.

It has been providentially ordered that just before such a time of sickness and death as the present, it was put into the hearts of your friends to arrange the 'Health Union,' and also the 'Friendly Help Society.' By the first, all the members who have been sick have been enabled to receive medical

assistance without any present expense, or any future burthen of debt. The 'Friendly Help Society' has been able to afford an important assistance to those families, where the number of children made the burthen of poverty to be felt more severely at this season of the year; and a further help has just been afforded to assist in restoring the strength of those who have been sick. It appears that there has been a mistake amongst some of you, as regards the free help which has thus been given you; and that some people suppose, that those who are members of the 'Health Union' are entitled to assistance from the 'Help Society' in return for the money they contribute. This is entirely a mistake. The members of the 'Health Union' are entitled to medical assistance, and nothing more; and nobody is entitled to any thing from the 'Help Society,' which is formed of persons who desire to befriend you, and for that purpose subscribe their own money. As occasion seems to require it, they agree to assist the persons who seem to them most to require help. It is a bad sign if such free gifts produce any thing but gratitude; and the people of this parish have great reason to thank God, not only that He stirred up the hearts of their friends to form such a Society, but that it should have been formed in time to help in relieving the wants of such a distressing season as the present.

Make it a subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that God may send His blessing with the present warnings and distress in the parish, that it may all work together for good by bringing us nearer to Christ Jesus.

## LXIX.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

The present truth.—2 Pet. i. 12.

18 June, 1837.

FROM the manner in which the Church service was attended last Sunday, when from accidental circumstances, it was performed in the evening instead of the afternoon, your Pastor has been induced to make some enquiries. These have led him to believe that it would suit more with the convenience of the parishioners generally, if the service continued to be at that hour in the evening, during the long days of the summer season. As your Pastor would willingly make any proper arrangement which may be convenient to the people, he has accordingly determined, that for the summer weeks, the second service shall be at half-past six o'clock on Sunday evenings. It will be important however to afford assistance to those persons who are desirous of help in occupying their minds on spiritual subjects, on the Lord's day; and therefore, the instruction which has hitherto been given in the school-room in the evening, will be given there in the afternoon, and shall occupy one hour. By this means the same opportunities of instruction will be afforded as before: but, during the summer time, the arrangement will be different, so as to be more suited to what appears to be the habits and wishes of the parishioners. One additional advantage will, by this means, be gained to the older children of the Sunday School; as they will attend the evening Church. At present, during the time which is not necessarily occupied in a way suitable to the Sabbath, some of the children are exposed to great temptations, to spend their hours in a very

improper manner, and this temptation will now be avoided. The arrangement of the services and other instructions on the Lord's day, will therefore be as follows during the summer.—

The *Sunday School* will open at a quarter before nine o'clock, exactly.

The *Morning Service* will begin at half-past ten.

The children of the *Sunday School* are to attend as usual at half-past two in the afternoon : but they are to meet in the school-room, instead of the church. At this time they will be catechised as before.

At half-past three o'clock exactly, the afternoon instruction in the school-room will begin : the church bells will be chimed for five minutes before this. It will be brought to a conclusion in time for the people to be dismissed by half-past four o'clock. The children of the *Sunday School* will be kept during this instruction : the lower classes will then be dismissed : but the upper classes will be directed to attend church in the evening. Permission to be absent in the evening however, will be given to the daughters of those mothers who, having infants, wish to come themselves to the evening church.

The *Evening Service* will begin at half-past six o'clock, precisely. The upper classes of the *Sunday School* will be dismissed immediately after the service.

## LXX.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

8 Oct. 1837.

For some time past there has been less attention paid than formerly to the rules relating to the Glebe Gardens, which are let to some of the parishioners. Your Pastor is desirous that these gardens should be as advantageous to the people as possible; both as regards the produce of the ground, and also by making them the means of encouraging those who are disposed to be industrious and to do what they can in following that Scripture which commands, "that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." (2 Thess. iii. 10—12.) For this purpose the rules have been newly arranged: and, in future, prizes will be given to those persons who can bring the best proofs that they have used good industry and attention in profiting by the advantages which are afforded them.

As there will be two or three gardens to be let this year, the Rector wishes all the parishioners to know in what manner he intends to act with respect to all the tenants.

The rules which are sent with this must be strictly attended to.

No person will be disturbed in the cultivation of his garden from year to year, as long as he pays proper attention to the rules.

In letting a vacant garden to any labourer, the Rector will seek for such persons as not only bear a respectable moral and religious character, but also such as have steady habits of industry.

If any person finds it difficult to understand any part of the following rules, they had better apply at the School-house, to have them explained; or else to the Rector himself, who will gladly give every information on the subject.

Although there is such short notice given this year, concerning the prizes, yet the first five prizes are offered to those who may wish to try for them according to the rules. All persons who intend to take advantage of this offer, must give in their names at the School-room, some time before the 21. October, 1837; and due notice will be given of the day for shewing the vegetables, and receiving the prizes.

## RULES

### FOR THE HOLDERS OF THE GARDENS IN WONSTON GLEBE.

1. The gardens will be let from year to year; beginning in future, from the 1st of November in each year. The same person may hold the same garden as long as he continues to obey the rules.

2. Any person who is guilty of drunkenness, or any other open and scandalous sin, shall not hold his garden on the following year: and if any person be convicted before a magistrate, of a serious offence against the laws, he shall be deprived of his garden at once.

3. Any person who works in his garden on any part of the Lord's day, shall be deprived of his garden at once.

4. Persons entirely neglecting the public worship of Almighty God, may be dismissed from their gardens after a twelve-month's notice.

5. The rent is to be paid monthly, either to the Rector, on the first Wednesday in every month, after the lecture; or at the School-room, in the course of that same week. If any person is unable to pay his monthly proportion of rent, he must ask leave to put off the payment, which will

be granted him for any reasonable cause; but if he should neglect to pay without asking leave, he will be fined a penny for every month that is owing: and if he neglect for six months, he will not be allowed to hold his garden next year.

6. The manure must be put upon each garden sometime before the 1st of April in each year; after which no cart will be allowed to come into the garden field, until the crops are taken up.

7. Any person who holds a garden may be called upon to perform the labour necessary to cultivate one of the widow's gardens; and if he does the work properly, he shall receive one shilling for his trouble at the end of the year, which is to be paid by the widow, at the rate of a penny a month.

### PRIZES,

The following Prizes are intended to be given by the Rector of Wonston, to the holders of the Glebe Gardens; and others.

- I. To the person who can produce the best gallon of Potatoes—Five shillings.
- II. For the second best gallon of Potatoes—Three shillings and sixpence.
- III. For the best dozen of Carrots—Three shillings.
- IV. For the best dozen of Onions—Three shillings.
- V. For the best dozen of Parsnips—Three shillings.
- VI. For the best three Cabbages—Two shillings.
- VII. For the best plate of broad Beans—Two shillings.
- VIII. For the best Nosegay—Two shillings.
- IX. To the person whose garden is in the best state of general cultivation—Seven shillings.
- X. To the person whose Cottage is in the best state of general neatness and cleanliness—Seven shillings.



## RULES CONCERNING THE PRIZES.

1. Any persons who hold Glebe Gardens may try for any of the Prizes : and may shew vegetables which are produced either from their Cottage Gardens or their gardens in the Glebe.

2. Persons who do not hold Glebe Gardens may also try for prizes for vegetables produced in their Cottage Gardens ; provided they are members of the ' Wonston Friendly Society,' or of the ' Health Union.'

3. The sixth, seventh, and eighth prizes will be decided on some day at the end of July, before harvest begins ; and all the other prizes will be decided on the same day as the School Ticket Sale at the end of October. All persons intending to try for prizes, must give in their names on the first Wednesday in July, and in October. The money for *all* the prizes will be given at October. The vegetables which are shewn for the prizes will all be returned to the persons who shew them.

4. Every person who tries for a prize, must make a declaration that all the vegetables shewn, are the produce of his own garden, cultivated by his own labour, or that of his family.

5. Any Garden-holder who obtains a prize, shall have two shillings added to it, if he is a member of the ' Wonston Friendly Society : ' and one shilling added, if he is a member of the ' Health Union.'

6. No person shall receive any prize, unless he has paid his rent, and kept the rules of the Garden-holders, if he has a Glebe Garden. And no person who is a member of the ' Wonston Friendly Society,' or of the ' Health Union,' shall receive any prize, unless he has paid all that is due from him to those Societies.

## LXXI.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

15 Oct. 1837.

A COLLECTION was made last Sunday at the church doors for the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society.' The occasion afforded an opportunity to your Pastor to lay before you the doctrine of the Word of God, concerning the duty of giving away something, for the purpose of relieving those who are in want. The sermon preached upon that occasion should be well considered; and therefore a Text Paper of it is sent to you to-day.

The reasons why even the poor should endeavour to deny themselves, that they may be able to enjoy the blessing of giving, were explained in that sermon; and it was stated, that, while it did not seem advisable to press the poor individually to this duty, for fear of ensnaring them into deceit, yet the minister ought to explain the duty generally, and to afford proper occasions by which the people may cultivate a spirit of giving, if they are disposed to do so.

At the end of the sermon three different steps in the exercise of this spirit were pointed out:—*local* charity—*national* charity—and *universal* charity.

Your Pastor is desirous of fulfilling what he considers to be his duty in this matter; and having explained to you the Scripture doctrine on the subject, he now draws your attention to the opportunities which are afforded you in this parish, of exercising these three degrees of the spirit of love.

I. The 'Wonston Friendly Help Society' is constantly en-

gaged in searching out cases of distress or affliction amongst the parishioners, and affording such relief as the funds will allow. (An account of what has been done by this Society during the last year will shortly be sent round the parish). The money is raised by donations, by yearly subscriptions, and by a collection after a sermon. Besides this, half the sacrament money is given for this object.

This is a *local* charity; and every person who is able ought to subscribe something yearly. If they do not like to place their names in the list of subscribers, they can put something, be it ever so little, into the plate after the sermon; or give it as a donation without the name.

The sacrament money is entirely employed for the benefit of those who are in want in the parish. The Communicants should remember this when they are preparing to come to the Table of the Lord. At the same time it may be proper to take this opportunity of mentioning, that no Communicant is *obliged* to give any thing at the Sacrament. It is to be feared that some poor persons may occasionally have kept away from the Communion because they had nothing to give. This would be very wrong indeed: and if it ever happens, it must be either through pride, or from superstition; and in every case it must be a device of Satan to hinder them from receiving a blessing.

II. Formerly there used to be a number of applications called '*briefs*' sent round to all the parishes in England, to obtain help for different cases of want which occurred in different parts. This custom is now done away with; and instead of a number of *briefs*, the Queen sends a letter once a year to the clergymen in the parishes; bidding them call on their parishioners to give assistance in money to some charity which is for the good of the whole nation.

This is a *national* charity; and whenever your Pastor reads the Queen's letter to you in Church, you ought to do what

you can to exercise the spirit of love in this way, by putting something into the plate, according as God has prospered you.

III. There are six hundred millions of people in the world who are perishing for want of knowing the Gospel. Missionaries are sent out to preach to these in many parts; and there only wants more money, that more Missionaries may be sent out.

An opportunity is afforded to every one in the parish to exercise the spirit of *universal* charity, by giving something towards this great and glorious object. Several persons are ready to collect any sums, however small, which may be given for this purpose. Any one who wishes to subscribe yearly, may do so. Missionary information is occasionally given to the people, both concerning those who preach to the Heathen, and those who preach to the poor Jews. Every year a General Meeting is held in the School-room, when many clergymen explain the subject to the people; and after this meeting, there is every year a sermon, and a collection after it; so that those who do not wish to subscribe any fixed yearly sum, may put what they like into the plate, be it ever so little.

It has been shewn to you in the sermon that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and let no man in this parish say that he has not any opportunity of obtaining this blessing. Whether the spirit of charity leads him to give *locally, nationally, or universally*, the means are open before him. May God dispose all our hearts to do what we can in this matter, with good will, "not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a cheerful giver." (2 Cor. ix. 7.)

There is still one point to be mentioned. It has been shewn you that charitable gifts are not measured by God according to the value of the things themselves; and it is a common proverb, that "every little helps." It is astonish-

ing how much may be done by a careful and constant remembrance of the blessedness of giving. There are many odd half-pence, which now and then are wasted, or squandered because they are odd money. These might be applied in charity and would in a year, amount to a good sum. Many a pint of beer is drank *unnecessarily*, which might bring a blessing if applied, for the love of Christ, to the relief of some distress. —Many a foolish trifle is bought which is of no use, but only it strikes the fancy at the time; and the money would be of infinite service, both to the giver, and the receiver, if properly applied in charity. God often sends providential mercies—some prosperous event happens to us—something which the unbelieving world calls ‘a piece of good luck.’ A Christian receives these providences as calls from God to impart some blessing of the same kind to others who are in want. The heart, renewed by the Spirit of Christ, desires upon these occasions, to give vent to such feelings, by doing something to relieve our fellow creatures. The members of the Church have an opportunity of doing this every month, at the Communion; but unfortunately, there are upwards of 200 persons in this parish who altogether withdraw themselves from Communion with the Church; and many others attend very seldom; and besides, the opportunity after all is only once a month.

One of the laws or canons of the Church supplies a remedy for this, and affords an opportunity at all times, for the gathering up of odd money—and the employment of money saved by self-denial—and the receiving of the thank-offering—and the expression of devout humility in charity. This law commands that every church shall be provided with “a strong chest with a hole in the upper part thereof; which chest shall be set and fastened in the most convenient place, to the intent that the parishioners may put into it their alms for their poor neighbours.” This is still the law,

although it has been for many years entirely neglected and forgotten in most parishes. It is however your Pastor's intention to act upon it in this parish; and to provide two such chests or boxes as those spoken of in the canon or law. One of these shall be called '*the Poor Neighbours' Box*,' and the other '*the Missionary Box*.' They shall be placed in the Church, on each side of the door, and thus every person may at all times have an opportunity of giving what he can, be it much, or be it little. The people shall be informed what money is found in these boxes. The money in the '*Poor Neighbours' Box*,' shall be divided into two parts; half shall go to the '*Friendly Help Society*,' and half to the aged and infirm in the parish who are most in want. The money in the '*Missionary Box*' shall also be divided into two parts; half shall be given to the Church Missionary Society, and half to the Society for converting the Jews.

May God send his blessing upon this arrangement. May many hearts be stirred up to a Christian liberality, so that much distress may be relieved: and may every one who puts the smallest sum into these boxes find the truth of "the words of the Lord Jesus, that it is more blessed to give than to receive."

## LXXII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

12 Nov. 1837.

For the eighth time, we are about to assemble together at the yearly meeting, for the purpose of being stirred up to our christian duty in sending the Gospel to those who are lying in darkness and the shadow of death, without the knowledge of the salvation of Christ. The same plan will be acted upon as last year; the public meeting in the School-room will come

first, and several clergymen are expected to attend, to explain the subject of Missionary duties, as upon former years. At this meeting there will be no collection, although any persons who wish to give something to forward the Missionary cause may take that opportunity of doing so, if they choose. The minds of the people having been prepared with information upon the subject at this meeting, the christian doctrine and duty relating to it, will be placed before them, in the sermon, upon next Sunday morning, after which there will be the usual collection. Persons who subscribe will be good enough to pay the subscriptions which may be due, to the collectors, early in the week, and the collectors will pay the sums they may have collected to ———, at the School-room, some time in the course of Thursday or Friday morning. Those persons who have Missionary Boxes in their houses will also be good enough to bring them, on one of those days, that they may be opened, and the money carried to the year's account. This will be a very proper occasion for those to begin to subscribe who have not yet done so; and those who feel disposed to take charge of a Missionary Box, may have them at the time of the Missionary meeting. May God put it into the hearts of many of this flock, to desire to send to the heathen that Gospel, concerning which they have so many opportunities of instruction.

Our yearly course of Psalmody is now completed, and will form a small volume, which will in future serve, year after year, for our singing in the church. The proper Psalmody for every week has been regularly sent to every house in the parish: this has been given to the people without any expense to them. Every person who chooses may now send these hymns to ———, at the School-room; the remaining portions (being about fifty extra hymns) shall be added, and they shall be bound up neatly and strongly. This shall be done for sixpence each to those who have already received the



hymns. Every body must however send their hymns in the course of the present week; that all may be received by Saturday next, the 18th November. This will allow time for the binding of them, that they may be ready for use again in the Church services on Advent Sunday. It would be very desirable that every person before he sends in the weekly hymns, should arrange them in the order in which the services come in the Prayer Book. Until the books are returned to the parishioners, the hymns will be given out in the Church by two lines at a time, to enable all the congregation to join in the singing, although they have not the words before them. This practice will however be discontinued on Advent Sunday, when the Psalmody will be again in the hands of the people.

The price of the hymn-book, bound, will be two shillings. As your Pastor has made a gift of one copy to each house in the parish, it is not his intention to give away any more; but, in future, he will allow any *of his own flock*, to purchase them at half-price. Complete hymn-books are now ready, and any person in the parish may have them upon applying and paying one shilling for each.

Make it the subject of your secret prayers, while you are engaged in your daily work, that there may be such a blessing upon the Missionary Meeting this week, that many poor heathens may in consequence have the opportunity of singing the praises of the Lord Jesus Christ, even as we do in our Church services.

## LXXIII.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

7 Jan. 1838.

WE have entered into a new year—another of those portions of time into which our life is divided. Your attention has been already called to the subject in the proverb which was sent to you on Sunday; and more particularly in the sermon on Sunday morning. The application of that sermon by each of you would be considered a matter of common prudence if there were a real understanding of the true value of time, as regards its employment for the object for which it was given us: and it is for the purpose of leading you all to a serious sense of the importance of taking advantage of the time that we have, to secure an interest in the atonement of Jesus Christ, that a statement is now sent to you of the facts which were mentioned in that sermon; that you may read them calmly at your leisure, and have time to consider the effect which they ought to have upon yourselves.

In the course of the year 1837, just passed, sixteen persons who lived in this parish, have been called out of this life to appear before God, and their state in eternity has been *fixed*. Remember that it is not for us to trouble our minds as to what that state is: they are gone, and by their deaths they have taught us the lesson pointed out by our Lord in Luke xiii. 1—5. All we have to say concerning *them* is that their state is *fixed*, whatever it is; and as soon as any one of us is called out of this world, *our* condition will be fixed also—just in the state of mind in which the stroke of death finds us, in that state we shall remain for ever; either in sin, and

selfishness, and worldliness, without God—and the state of such will be to be cast out from God for ever—or in faith, in spiritual life, in practical religion, and in the good works which are its necessary fruits ; in a word, in Christ—and the state of such will be in Christ's glory for ever. None of us can tell whether our *present* state may not be *fixed* for ever by the stroke of death in the course of the present year. How important then, above all things, must it be, that our *present* state should be the right state ; and if it be not so, how earnestly should we, above all things, hasten to “ lay aside every weight, and the sin which most easily besets us,” that we may make our calling and election sure, “ even to-day, while it is called to-day.” (Heb. iii. 12—15.)

Of the sixteen souls who have been called away from amongst us, during the last year, two were infants : of the remaining number five were ripened into mature age. But the most striking lesson is taught by the fact, that the others were all persons who were in the strength of their life, whose ages were far short of the term of man's days (Psalm xc. 10.) The number of these were nine ; a greater number than the aged and infants together.

To make the truth conveyed by these facts more likely to strike the mind, and come more plainly before us, it may be as well to look back a few years, and examine the facts upon a larger scale. Your Pastor has just completed the ninth year of his ministry amongst you. What would have been the effect, if, on the first day of his preaching the word of God to you, he had said that in nine years he should be called upon to bury a hundred and twenty-five of the people ? Yet this has been the case. Of these thirty-six have been infants, most of whom were unborn at the beginning of the nine years ; and thirty-eight have dropped off in the maturity of years : but no less than fifty-one persons have died within the last nine years, who were in the strength of their life, without

that natural warning which fulness of years is intended to convey. What then would have been the effect, if at the beginning of your Pastor's ministry amongst you, he had foretold, that, besides the natural decay, which, in the course of nine years, would bring to the grave thirty-eight aged persons, no less than fifty-one of the young, and the healthy, and the strong, who were then in the parish, would be called out of this present life, and fixed for ever in one of the awful alternatives of the eternal state. Yet such a prophecy as this would have been a true one. May every one of us look forward, that each may be ready whatever the new year may bring forth; and may God "so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." (Psalm xc. 12.)

It may be a useful help, in the examination of your hearts which these truths ought to excite, that you should have before you some account of the state of the profession that was made in the parish during the last year. For this purpose a Pastor's Account is sent with this, containing another step in the Communion Account. The two first numbers of the Pastor's Account were sent to you last Easter; you are advised to refer to them now, that you may the better understand the third.

*Remember*—more people die in youth and middle age, than in full age, or than infants. In nine years thirty-six infants have died, and thirty-eight old people: but the young and middle aged were fifty-one. (Eccles. xii. 1.)

## LXXIV.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

11 Feb. 1838.

THE account of the money received in the 'Wonston Health Union,' for the year 1837, is sent round to you with this. Eighty-one members have paid, more or less, in the course of that year. Sixty-seven different families or single persons have continued during the whole year to entitle themselves to medical advice and assistance whenever they might have occasion for it. Four persons who have been members have left the parish; and ten persons, after having paid during some portion of the year, have ceased their payments, and of course have no further claim upon the surgeon.

The number of members at the beginning of the present year, after leaving out the names of those who no longer pay to the Union, was sixty-five: two new members have been added since; so that the present number is sixty-seven.

After all the explanation that has been given in the parish concerning the 'Health Union,' it seems strange that there should be any occasion to explain any more. But there is reason to fear that some persons are apt to make a mistake, and confuse the thought of the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society,' with the payments which are made to the 'Wonston Health Union.' To prevent this you are requested to read again the "Word" No. 28, which was sent to you in October, 1836: and to make the matter more clear, you must take notice of the following remarks.

The 'Wonston Health Union' has nothing whatever to do with the 'Friendly Help Society.' The members of the

'Health Union' pay a small sum of money, every farthing of which goes to the surgeon, and is very little indeed compared, with the advantages which they gain. By making this small payment they are entitled to medical advice and assistance whenever they are afflicted with any illness. And be their illness ever so great, or ever so long, they will be attended all the while, and have no doctor's bill to pay at the end.

The 'Wonston Friendly Help Society' is one to which the poor pay no money at all. The money comes entirely by free gifts and subscriptions from those who kindly desire to assist their poorer neighbours. To this is added money offered at the Communion, and that found in the 'Poor Neighbours' Box' in the church. It is distributed by a committee of persons, who meet once a month, according to their judgment of those who most need help: and they afford assistance to those whom they believe to be in need of it, without considering in the least whether such persons pay to the 'Health Union' or not.

# ACCOUNT OF THE WONSTON HEALTH UNION.

From the 1st of January to the 31st of December 1837.

The money which has been received during the year 1837 is as follows—

|                                                      |    |    |   |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|
| 30 families have paid at the rate of 5s. in the year | £7 | 10 | 0 |
| 26 families have paid at the rate of 4s. in the year | 5  | 2  | 8 |
| 11 single persons have paid at the rate of 3s. in    |    |    |   |
| the year . . . , . . . , . . . . .                   | 1  | 13 | 0 |

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67

14 persons have paid only for a part of the year ;  
and then have either left the parish, or given  
up their payments.

The amount they have paid is . . . . 1 4 7

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81

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3 women have paid for their confinements, each 8s. 1 4 0

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£16 14 3

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The above sum of sixteen pounds, fourteen shillings and three pence, has been paid over to the surgeon.

The number of members of the ' Wonston Health Union' is as follows—

30 families paying 5s. a year.

27 families paying 4s. a year.

10 persons paying 3s. a year.

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67

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## LXXV.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK.

29 April, 1838.

AFTER the sermon of this morning, a Text Paper of which is given you, it must strike the mind of every one, that there ought not to be a single house in the parish without family prayer. Your Pastor feels that, though he has done his duty in laying this subject plainly before you, he cannot be satisfied while one family remains without this necessary Christian service. There are 144 houses in the parish; in how many of these is there family prayer morning and evening? Your Pastor hopes that this question may be answered more satisfactorily next Advent season, than at present. He will not therefore answer it now, but will put off the answer till next Advent. In the mean time he will do all he can to help every one who desires to do this duty; and to leave every one without excuse who desires to avoid doing it.

It is intended, if God permit, to print seven portions of plain prayer, suited for the use of all families; one portion to be used on each day of the week. To accustom your minds, however, to the use of these prayers, they will not be all sent to you at once. On the first Sunday in each month, a portion will be sent; which, though meant only for one day in the week, may be profitably used every day during that month. By this means, after seven months, the whole week's prayers will have come into use; and then the portions may be sewed together, and used afterwards, each on its regular day. It is intended that one portion should be sent you next Sunday.



May God, for Christ's sake, send his Holy Spirit, and bless this endeavour to give Him due honour in every family in the parish.

## LXXVI.

## TEXT PAPER,

*Or, Thoughts to be taken home after hearing the Sermon, preached on Sunday, April 29th, 1838. Together with Texts to prove that they are according to God's Word, and to fix them on the mind.*

Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. 1 Thess. v. 21.

FAMILY PRAYER. TEXT—Col. iii. 16—iv. 2.

THERE is nothing more important to Christian life than a right understanding of prayer. It is not only the means of habitual intercourse with God, by which heavenly things are so mixed up with our earthly concerns, that we may be kept from a spirit of worldliness which is apt to creep upon us all; but it is also the proper method of expressing our dependance upon God—of acknowledging our duty to Him—and of placing ourselves in the way of receiving his mercies and blessings. Psa. cv. 4; Phil. iv. 6; John xiv. 13.

Each one ought to take this method of claiming God's goodness for himself in particular; and if he does not, he can have no right to be considered as a Christian. A number of persons living together in the same country become a nation, and as a nation they require special mercies and blessings from God, which they should join together nationally in asking by prayer. This leads to public prayer, by which all the members of the Church of Christ come together in bodies or congregations, to express their united wants as well as their personal need; and so are helping each other in seeking

the mercies which are necessary for each and for all. Acts ii. 42; Heb. x. 25; 1 Kings viii. 22, 23, 30.

But besides this there is a mode of prayer which is specially important, both as an evidence of Christian faith, and a means of particular blessings. This is the regular joining together of all the persons who form the same household for the exercise of family religion—**FAMILY PRAYER**.

There are four principal reasons which make *family prayer* in every case a distinct duty, and the truest wisdom.

I. A family consists of a number of persons who are all so joined together in this life, that it is impossible for any thing to happen to one of that number, without affecting all the others more or less. A child or a parent cannot be sick or die without every person in the family being distressed and troubled. If a child or a parent fall into sin, all the relations suffer more or less in consequence. If a servant be disabled by sickness, or be dishonest, or commit any sin, every one in that family feels the effects. So also every good thing that happens to one person in a family, is felt as a good to every other one in the same family. This makes it reasonable that all the members of the same family should join in taking the proper means for preserving each from evils, and bringing good to each, and therefore to all. The means is prayer to God, in which every family in a body should join, that, as one body, they may be blessed. 1 Cor. xii. 26, 27; Rom. xii. 15, 16; ix. 1—3; 2 Cor. i. 11.

II. The Scriptures assure us that there are great benefits promised simply to family relationship. The privilege by which children are brought to Christ through the appointed means of baptism, is altogether a family privilege; so that a father or a mother, becoming a Christian, has a right to bring the children to baptism, which heathen fathers and mothers have not. Instances of this privilege abound in Scripture. Acts ii. 39. (Remember that in the following texts the words

"house" and "household" mean "family"). Acts xi. 14; xvi. 15, 33; Rom. i. 16. Much encouragement is given also in Scripture to expect a spiritual blessing on the tie of husband and wife. 1 Cor. vii. 14, 16; 1 Pet. iii. 1—7. The Scripture also places the duty of servants upon the ground that obedience to masters is to be done as to the Lord; and requires masters to rule as having a master in heaven. Eph. vi. 5—9; Col. iii. 22—25; iv. 1; 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2; Tit. ii. 9, 10. If such benefits are promised simply to family connexion, and if family duties are enforced upon the ground of obedience to God, it is plain there should be a family application for their fulfilment, and a family acknowledgment of God, which can only be done by **FAMILY PRAYER**.

III. A special promise is given by Christ, that He will meet and attend at every collection of persons praying in his name; and that a blessing will follow when persons agree together to ask the same thing in prayer. This would seem particularly applicable to family prayer; because the number of persons mentioned as enough to bring this blessing is two or three; and even only two agreeing may plead the promise: no persons are so likely to be fully agreed about the things they ask of God as those who are so connected as is described in No. I. Matt. xviii. 19, 20; Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 19; Col. iv. 15; Philemon 2.

IV. It is a distinct duty to bring up children in the knowledge and service of God: and to use all the influence we have over others connected with us to lead them in the same way. Eph. vi. 4; Prov. xxii. 6; Psalm lxxviii. 5—7. There is no other means by which the head of a family can, of his own act, plainly fulfil this duty, except by regular family prayer. Every head of a family may, and ought to take care that his family attend the public worship of God: but by so doing he only takes advantage of the means provided by others for the purpose—a wise and profitable thing to do, but

not enough. By regularly calling his household to family prayer, he himself leads them in the way they should go, and does an act, of his own accord; which shews them plainly that he looks to God for all his family blessings, and teaches them to do the same. Gen. xviii. 19; Joshua xxiv. 19.

After shewing these four principal reasons for Family Prayer, it remains to point out the particular application of the text to the subject. In verses 16 and 17, religious exercises are spoken of in a way which shews they must be meant to be done by several persons together, in companies. Then to chap. iv. ver. 1, the different duties of wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and masters, are enforced and urged, upon religious grounds. No other duties are mentioned in this place, while all these are strictly family duties; and the word that immediately follows (verse 2) is "continue in prayer," &c. It can hardly be wrong to conclude that, taken in such a connexion, the meaning is "continue in family prayer," that you may be blessed in the performance of all these family duties.

#### QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION UPON THIS SERMON.

1. Is family prayer used morning and evening in the house in which I live? and am I in the habit of joining?
2. Having a family myself, have I also daily prayer with them? If not, how can I answer for the neglect of this duty?

## LXXVII.

A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS  
FLOCK,

The present truth. 2 Pet. i. 12.

28 Oct. 1838.

TOGETHER with this there will be sent round the parish the forty-second number of the 'Cottager's Guide to the New Testament,' which closes the second volume of this work.\* Those who have received the numbers regularly, and have preserved them, may have them bound up (with the addition of several useful indexes) in the same manner, and upon the same terms, as the first volume was bound. If any persons have lost any of the numbers, and wish to replace them, they must purchase the parts they have lost. Those who desire to have them bound, may send their numbers any time during the course of this week.

Your Pastor cannot come to the close of the second volume of this work, without expressing thankfulness to God for having thus helped on, and prospered this endeavour for His glory. It was undertaken for the use of the flock committed to his care; but it has been distributed in many other places besides this parish; and there is good reason to hope that it has not been without a blessing. It is now nearly four years since it was begun; and it is a serious consideration for the people of this parish, that month after month there has been left at the door of every house in the parish the simple explanation of a portion of God's Word, with directions how each person may apply the portion, and with instructions how

\* This work is published in monthly numbers, by Messrs. Nisbet and Co.

to make it a subject of prayer. This has been placed in the house of each family in the flock, without money and without price. And now these continual portions have become so many, that they make two volumes; and contain explanations of every verse in the New Testament, as far as the first thirteen chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, the first five chapters of St. Mark's, the first eight chapters of St. Luke's, and the first five chapters of St. John's. Many amongst you may perhaps have considered this as a trifling matter, and laid the little monthly portion aside as of no account: but any such person may be assured that some account will be taken of this seemingly trifling matter hereafter; and if one person be found ignorant of any saving truth, explained in those portions which have been regularly dropped before them in this manner, what excuse can that person hope to make for his sinful ignorance? If he attempted to make any, the little monthly portion would rise up in judgment against him. While your Pastor feels satisfied that by this means he does his best to send the word of salvation even to those who will not come to hear it preached; he cannot feel satisfied, as regards the flock, without warning them of their responsibility for this mode of instruction; and he takes this occasion, when he offers to arrange a second volume into a convenient form for their reading, while returning thanks to the Giver of all good gifts for the merciful assistance with which hitherto the Lord has helped us.

## LXXVIII.

## ADDRESS

TO EVERY PERSON IN THE PARISH.

10 May, 1840.

THE number of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament sent round the parish this week, will conclude the third volume; and will also complete an important division in the Gospel History.

It is impossible for your Pastor to arrive at so advanced a point in this work, without calling upon you all to join with him in thanksgiving to God, who has enabled him to carry on so far the execution of this plan; and who has permitted so much apparent success to attend this endeavour to promote His glory in extending the knowledge of Jesus Christ. It was begun more than five years ago with little expectation of the result which has followed. It was meant at first for the instruction and advantage of the people of this parish; but an opening having occurred for its more extended publication, it has been circulated in other parts of England; so that many hundreds of persons are reading every month the instruction which is prepared especially for the parishioners of Wonston. Your Pastor has received communications from various quarters, which leave no reasonable doubt that in several places the reading of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament has been attended with evident benefit and blessing; and while he rejoices at this with earnest gratitude to the Author of every good gift, without whose blessing no work intended for His glory can have its effect, he cannot but tremble at the increased responsibility which is hereby placed upon those for whose especial benefit this little book has been written, number by number, until it has grown to three

volumes; containing a particular explanation and application of every word in half the Gospel History. Hundreds of persons, wholly unconnected with your Pastor, have shewn their desire to profit by this work, by paying their money to possess it; so that many thousands of the monthly numbers have been sold. To every family in this parish each number has been regularly sent as a free gift, and as a token that God has sent you one of His servants to care for your souls, and to teach you line upon line of that precious Gospel, by the power of which you may each be brought to the salvation of Christ (Rom. i. 16), through the belief of that which is thus brought to your doors, and left in your houses. Whenever your Pastor has been encouraged by some token of God's goodness in making these simple explanations useful to persons who do not belong to his own flock, the doctrine contained in our Lord's statement in Matt. xii. 41, 42., (see Cottager's Guide, vol. ii. page 176) has risen up in his mind, with much anxiety, lest these strangers, who have profited at a distance, should be like the men of Nineveh and the Queen of the south; and rise up in the judgment against some of his flock, who may neglect, or refuse, or, it may be despise the free gift of that instruction, which has proved effectual to those who have sought it out, and purchased it with money. It is not in the power of any man to discern fully what is in the heart of another; but as we may be permitted to form an opinion from outward actions, it would seem reasonable to fear that there are some of this flock who expose themselves to the danger of having such witnesses rise up against them in the judgment. For though your Pastor (for his own sake, to satisfy himself that he has left no one in the parish without a testimony of the truth in his house) has regularly sent the numbers of the Cottager's Guide to each family; yet since the beginning of the present year, he has sent the Pastoral Calendar, and other weekly papers, only to



those who have expressed a wish to have them : and as there are several families in the parish, who, in spite of the public notice sent to each, have expressed no wish upon the subject, and who therefore refuse to avail themselves of that instruction which your Pastor is willing to afford, it is but reasonable to conclude that neither do they take pleasure, nor receive profit, in reading the Cottager's Guide, which is sent to them. It is sad to think that this little book, may, one day, turn out to be in some cases, like the flying roll of paper (or book,) which Zechariah saw (Zech. v. 1—4.) going forth over the whole parish, only perhaps, that it may "remain in the midst of the house" of some one who calls on the name of Christ falsely, to be a means of destruction in the day of the Lord's coming.

While your Pastor cannot refrain from expressing these feelings upon closing the third volume of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, in order affectionately to warn those whom God has placed under his charge (1 Cor. iv. 14); he at the same time rejoices that he is not without hope that many of you have profited by this means of instruction ; and thanking God for his merciful help hitherto, he goes forward with comfort and courage, in the assurance that with many of his own flock also, his labour has not been in vain in the Lord.

All persons residing in the Parish who have kept the numbers of the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament, which have been sent to them, may have the third volume bound up like the former ones, and upon the same terms.

## LXXIX.

## A WORD FROM THE PASTOR TO HIS FLOCK.

14 June, 1840.

WE have arrived at the division of the year made by the Church in her services (the nature and object of which have been often explained to you); and your Pastor takes this opportunity of sending you "a Word," in which he desires to speak of several matters more or less interesting and important to the Church in this Parish, and to all persons dwelling amongst us. May God fulfil herein the petitions which His people have put up during the past week, and "grant us by His Holy Spirit to have a right judgment in all things."

I. It is one advantage to be derived from use, that we may be able always to improve in what we are constantly doing: and any of you who will look back to the first printed papers, sent to you by your Pastor in the year 1833, will doubtless observe that use has greatly improved these papers, and rendered them more applicable to the spiritual instruction and advantage of those who seek to profit by them. There is no reason why we should not go on improving in this way. Circumstances will not allow your Pastor to look forward with any certainty to be able to send to you weekly more than two pages of the regular Calendar; although he hopes to be able, from time to time, to add text-papers, tracts, or such other addresses as he may judge to be for your benefit. As this is the case, he is very desirous of making this regular weekly paper as spiritually profitable as he can; and as little occupied by other matters as possible. Yet it is important to keep up the interest in several subjects connected with the

Church; and this is done by conveying that information which is found in many of the past Calendars as Notices, &c. It would seem to be an improvement upon our present plan, that the short weekly Calendar should be entirely filled with such matter as might direct the spiritual appetite of God's people to its proper food; and that whatever information is given on subjects interesting to the church and the parish, should be arranged by itself, and distributed less frequently. Your Pastor therefore intends in future to fill up the second page of the Calendar in another manner than heretofore; and once a month to send round a paper to be called the '*Wonston Monthly Church Account*;' which will contain such information as it may be judged useful to convey to the members of the Church, or to the people of the parish in general. This will be sent to every house in the parish, as formerly; while the Calendars, &c. will be sent only to those who express a desire to have them, as at present. In general this '*Monthly Church Account*' will be sent on the second Sunday in each month; in order that it may contain the account of the Communion on the first Sunday.

II. As there will commonly be a small space under the daily divisions of the weekly Calendar, your Pastor intends to occupy it with a very short opening of some text, or portion of God's Word. No attempt will be made at explanation: but a few words will be given to serve as directions how each person may gather fruit for themselves from the text proposed. The principal matter of the text will be merely spread out a little, in order to direct the thoughts on what road to travel (so to speak); and in this point of view, the short heads or divisions may be considered as *Finger-posts*, pointing out the way to find the treasures laid up by the Spirit of God in the Scriptures mentioned, and which treasures require some diligent searchings of thought in order to find them. These *Finger-posts* do not pretend to take the spiritual traveller

along the road (which may more properly be said to be done by a Sermon); they only point to the road, which those may take who wish to find the riches of God's Word. A traveller would never arrive at his journey's end by only looking at a finger-post, though it told him the road ever so correctly, unless he walked on the way it directs him. So also those who are satisfied with merely looking at the few words given with each text, will not gain any good, nor are they likely to find them worth reading; but if they themselves will carry on the thoughts thus suggested to their minds, and will diligently think on in the direction pointed out, they will profit by the exercise, and will reach some of the treasures which abound in the Scriptures, and which are always to be obtained by spiritual searching. The texts chosen for these Finger-posts will occasionally be those intended to be more fully explained in some of the services in the course of the week. When this happens, your Pastor will afterwards guide those who are really spiritual travellers along the road thus pointed out; but he advises you all not to wait for his guidance upon these occasions, but to set forward at once, thinking over the thoughts suggested; which will be one sure way of profiting more fully by the larger ministerial explanations afterwards.

III. The Catechism questions in the weekly portions of knowledge and doctrine have now reached to 107. It has been suggested to your Pastor, that when they are completed it might be useful to print the whole in one little volume, together with a set of suitable answers. Such a plan may possibly be put in execution hereafter, if God will. At all events your Pastor would desire to prepare for it; and for this purpose it would be very advantageous to have the answers got ready weekly: he invites every person who can write, and who feels disposed to take the trouble, to write out answers to the questions every week, and leave them at the School-room, either in Wonston or in Sutton. The best would

be selected from these to be inserted in the proposed volume. If those who send these answers will sign their names to them, whenever an answer shall be made which shews that they need further instruction on the subject, your Pastor will take a private opportunity of giving such instruction as may seem necessary. Answers may also be sent without names, the writers of which would of course lose this advantage. Whether the names be stated or not, it is to be distinctly understood that your Pastor will never speak publicly of any answers as given by any particular persons.

IV. It must be very plain to every one, that many persons in this parish need to be reminded of the importance of arriving at church in time to begin the service. The Sunday congregations have been lately much interrupted in the early part of the service by the entrance of persons coming in late; and while this delay is a habit which easily grows, a little forethought, and resolution to prepare necessary things on the Sabbath at an early hour, will be sufficient to correct it. Your Pastor is convinced that this friendly mention of the subject will be quite enough to remedy the evil. It may however be well to state, that the clock by which the clerk has orders to be guided as to ringing the bells, is always regulated on Saturday evenings; and that the first bell is rung on Sunday mornings for five minutes ending precisely at eight o'clock; and that the second, or school-bell, is rung for five minutes ending precisely at a quarter before nine o'clock. An attention to either of these bells will enable every body in the parish to arrange their own clocks so as to know the right time for the services.

V. Your Pastor desires to take this opportunity of again calling your attention to the real importance of letting it be plainly known that every person joins in the proper part of the services of the church. It is pleasing to find that there is much right feeling upon this point in the congregation; but

still there are some who do not seem to partake in the worship at which they are present. It is a mistake to suppose that because the person who holds the office of clerk usually repeats the responses, and says Amen *aloud*, it is either his part to do so especially, or the part of the congregation to leave it undone. It is quite accidental that the clerks have so generally acquired the habit of doing this in our churches; and it is the people, who are appointed by the Rubric to respond, not the clerk, who is not mentioned at all in that respect. To encourage the devotional feeling of the congregation, your Pastor has given directions to the clerk not to speak louder than any other person; and he hopes that all persons in the congregation will fulfil that part of the service assigned to them in the Prayer-book.

VI. The alms-boxes in the church have not been found to contain such sums of money as upon the whole might have been expected. The exact amount in each has been stated to you every month. There surely ought to be many occasions on which small donations should be made as thank-offerings to God for mercies received; even if the alms-boxes in the church were not considered as the place to deposit those portions set apart weekly from the store with which God prospers a Christian, of which we have a Scriptural example mentioned in 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Whatever has been found in the Missionary Box has been divided between the Church Jews' Society, and the Church Missionary Society; and whatever has been found in the Poor Neighbours' Box, has hitherto been given to the 'Wonston Friendly Help Society.' This however has added very little to their funds; and in future your Pastor intends to apply it to another object. Many may have been prevented before from putting any thing into this box by thinking that there were other subscriptions to help the sick and needy in the parish, by the 'Friendly Help Society;' but in future every one may know that when

they put what they may be able to afford into this alms-box, it will be a separate fund to benefit those who stand most in need of it; and that it will add to the benefit which they may have from any other source. The Scripture speaks much of the care that should be taken for widows; and in the church of the Apostles a number of widows, who were "widows indeed," were always relieved by the alms of the whole body. (1 Tim. v. 3, 9, 10, 16.) Your Pastor intends in future that, besides any benefit which poor widows may receive from the 'Friendly Help Society' in common with other sick or destitute persons, all the money found in the 'widows' alms-box' (as it will in future be called) in the church, shall be given to such poor widows in the parish as by their general conduct shew that they strive to be what the apostle calls "widows indeed." An account of the sums thus received, and of the number of widows who have been benefited by it, will be regularly given in the Monthly Church Account; and your Pastor invites you all to do what you can from time to time in this respect; "and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.)

## LXXX.

## ADDRESS

*To the District Assistants in the Parish of Wonston, and  
Instructions to them.*

THE Rector of Wonston is anxious to render the application of the ministry of the Word of God to his parishioners as extensive as possible, and therefore wishes to take advantage of the Christian kindness of those to whom God has given a desire to forward the work, by making use of their offered assistance in certain portions of his charge. He heartily thanks them for their intention of devoting some of their time

in overlooking the allotted portion, and in conveying to him such information, as will enable him with greater advantage of discernment, and with less expense of time, to provide for the spiritual wants of the people; and to alleviate, as far as possible, their temporal sufferings.

It is, however, especially, important that the District Assistants should remember, that to be really profitable to themselves and to the people, their work must be undertaken and carried on in a prayerful spirit, depending upon the Divine assistance in every thing they say or do in discharge of their office, and seeking that assistance by frequent and earnest supplication.

A book will be given to each Assistant, in which a page will be allotted to each house; this will supply a list of every person in the district, together with several particulars relating to each.

Every family in the district should be visited *at least* once in every month, and may be visited as many more times as the convenience of the assistant will permit. The oftener each family is visited the greater will be the advantage gained by the system. It is not to be supposed that because any person kindly takes the charge of a particular district, that he is thereby to withdraw himself from making visits in other parts of the parish. The Rector looks for a communication in regular order through the assistant of the district; but the occasional visits of other than the appointed persons would considerably help the general system.

On the first Saturday in every month the assistants will be kind enough to attend at the Rectory, at six o'clock in the evening precisely, to make their monthly reports. The particulars to be mentioned in these reports will be specified at the end of the instructions. This regular monthly report is not to prevent the frequent communication to the Rector of any thing that may be judged important for him to know,



which should be immediately stated, as the information he derives from the assistants will, in a great measure, guide his own ministerial visits.

The object of District Visiting is, to form a link between the minister and the people, by which the former may know where most effectually to direct his attention for the benefit of the latter. To effect this, the assistant must frequently enter into conversation with the people, using his judgment whether he should speak directly or indirectly, so that he may obtain some insight into the state of mind of each person respecting spiritual things, and subsequently convey this knowledge to the minister.

There are many subjects upon which the people feel restrained in communicating directly with the minister, being withheld by various motives which do not act so strongly when speaking to other persons. When these subjects, however, are once opened by the minister the restraint is removed. The help of the District Assistant will be highly valuable in this respect, and they may much contribute to the freeness of ministerial intercourse. On the other hand it frequently happens that a message upon some subject may be sent by the minister to one of his parishioners, with much better effect than would be produced if he were to make the same communication in person. Occasions are frequent in which it is not desirable, either that the parishioner should commit himself, as he must do if he have to answer a certain question at once to the minister; nor that the minister should commit himself as he must do if he have to decide at once upon a line of conduct consequent upon a reply made to himself. In such cases a District Assistant, deputed by the minister, may be of the most essential importance in conveying a message, the answer to which may be softened and modified before he consents to receive it from the parishioner; while time is thus afforded to the minister for calm consideration, previous to adopting a line

of conduct which, when once decided on, may involve important consequences.

There are four classes of objects by which the District Assistants are to endeavour to promote the welfare of the people. These are—

I. The particular application to each of the minister's general spiritual instruction.

II. The promoting an effective use of all the means of grace.

III. The promoting an effective use of all the opportunities of education.

IV. The ascertaining the real state of their temporal distresses.

Under each of these heads, there are several points to which the Rector desires to direct the attention of the Assistants.

I. The first class is—

“The particular application to each of the minister's general spiritual instruction.”

1. A searching inquiry should be made as to the manner in which each person has attended to the subject explained on the previous Sunday. This should form a considerable portion of conversation, and will afford the Assistant opportunity of removing misapprehensions, clearing away doubts, and discovering ignorance. A memorandum should be made in the District Book of the result in the Assistant's mind after such conversations. When the Assistant knows of any points upon which the minister may have particularly dwelt with any individual, it should be enforced and repeated.

2. The Rector is in the habit of letting the subject he means to preach upon be known in various ways during the previous week. The Assistants should prepare the minds of the people for an increased attention to the preaching of the next Lord's Day, by leading their thoughts to the anticipated

subject, without stating that it is such. This is calculated to excite an additional interest, when the matter of the sermon is found to relate to the conversation previously had with the District Assistant.

3. To carry on the great object mentioned under this head, the Rector recommends a judicious distribution of tracts. He would generally desire that the tracts to be distributed should be submitted to him in the first place, if the District Assistant procures them himself; but there is always a supply of tracts at the Rectory, from which a selection may be made. These tracts will suggest subjects of conversation: some might be only lent, others given.

4. A number of the 'Cottager's Guide to the New Testament' is regularly sent to every house in the parish every month. This work was begun by the Rector expressly for his own people, and though now more largely circulated, it is continued with an especial reference to their instruction. The District Assistants would do well to call attention to this, and to read the monthly portion in the several families. It is particularly important that the aged persons should have this read to them, and the reading to the aged will form a large portion of the Assistants' duty, for which the Cottager's Guide will always supply a portion of Scripture, and an explanation and application directly sent to each by the minister. A similar attention to those who cannot read, of whatever age, will be very desirable.

By conversations interspersed with reading the Scriptures, the Assistant will be able to form a tolerably correct view of the usual habit of thinking of the persons in the district; whether there are any serious thoughts of religion—whether there is a carelessness about it—or whether religion is a matter of form.

5. The minister frequently selects from the Bible some text which he leaves with the inhabitants of a cottage to be remem-

bered until he calls again. If inquiry were occasionally made whether a text so proposed had been thought of, ready to be said in case the minister should call, it might be attended with a beneficial effect. The District Assistants might adopt a similar plan themselves, as it has been found useful, not only in keeping up a continued attention to the text itself, but also in suggesting an immediate subject of conversation upon a subsequent visit.

II. The second class is—

“The promoting an effective use of all the means of grace.”

1. Under this head the Church Services occur as the first. These consist of—

Morning Service and Sermon at half-past ten o'clock.

Afternoon Service and Sermon at half-past three o'clock.

Evening Instruction in the School-room, at seven o'clock.

Though it would be desirable that every person should attend all the services, yet as in many cases this could scarcely be made consistent with necessary domestic arrangements, it should be the District Assistant's care to understand what plan each family intends to pursue—which service the husband attends, and which the wife; and by judicious hints to rectify any thing in the arrangements which may require alteration: to observe in the church whether the plan is adhered to; and a little kind inquiry when it is departed from, would shew that there is an interest taken in the family, which would greatly tend to promote regularity. The course to be pursued to those who do not come to church regularly, or at all, will readily suggest itself. A system of kind persevering advice and affectionate remonstrance will often, under God's blessing, be found to succeed.

2. There is a Wednesday evening service in the Church, at half past six in the winter, and seven in the summer, at which a course of Scripture exposition is given. The people should

be induced to attend this, as their other duties may permit. Inquiries should be made whether the portion of Scripture has been afterwards read at home. A proposal to explain any difficulties which might have occurred, will often lead to much profitable conversation.

3. The Weekly Cottage Reading at Sutton is intended principally for the benefit of aged persons; but others who live in the neighbourhood ought to be urged to take advantage of it whenever their duties and necessary occupations will permit.

4. Every individual who can read should possess a Bible. It is not enough that there be one in a family—the District Assistants should endeavour to induce every member of each family to procure one for himself. Bibles, Testaments, Prayer-books, and Hymn-books are kept at the School-room and in the Vestry Room for sale, at various prices, and of various sizes. The prices are very low, and the poor people should be urged to accumulate pence for the purpose of procuring a Bible at all events; also subsequently a Prayer-book. The District Assistants can take charge of these pence until they have brought a proper sum; and when a real anxiety has been shewn, by small acts of self-denial, to possess a Bible, the Rector will always give some portion towards the amount if it be needed.

5. The people have been often earnestly exhorted to establish the custom of family prayers in every house; some have attended to the exhortation, and have continued in the use of family worship; others, who had begun, have subsequently neglected it; and many have not commenced it at all. It is of extreme importance that this duty should be established in every family, and continued perseveringly. A plain form of family prayer will be given gratuitously to every person who will make use of it. The District Assistants should attend to this point, and when they have succeeded in prevail-

ing upon any person in their district to adopt the custom, it is desirable that the Assistant should be present one night to commence it, and should afterwards attend occasionally at the prayer-time, to keep up the impulse to the performance of that duty.

6. It has been found to be much blessed, as a means of grace, that the people should be called upon to feel an interest in the spiritual condition of the heathen nations. By this means their own religious privileges are set before them in a more valuable light; and the sense of their own responsibility under them is quickened. The state of the heathen and the progress of missionaries is explained to the people every month, and they are recommended to contribute some assistance towards the missionary cause; the District Assistants are requested to promote this feeling by making missionary intelligence a subject of conversation; and by pointing out the duty of giving some small portion of the sufficiency with which God blesses them towards this Christian object. It would be desirable also that the Assistants should be collectors for the societies, that they may receive the money from the people.

7. Under the head of the means of grace the two Sacraments must be considered as the most important. Great assistance may be afforded by the District Assistants in the arrangements concerning baptism. Many notions are entertained concerning the Sacrament of baptism, which are very obscure, erroneous, and superstitious. From the time that it is known a woman is about to give birth to a child, the endeavour of the Assistant should be particularly directed to awaken her mind to a sense of the deeply interesting responsibility of her situation. When the child is born, much good may be done by suggesting to the parents the importance of a deliberate and judicious choice of sponsors; and when improper persons are thought of, the impropriety of selecting them may

be pointed out, and other more fitting persons proposed. Particulars on this subject, ascertained by the Assistant and communicated to the minister, will be of great use in his subsequent ministrations. A few words of advice also to persons who are about to become sponsors will be very valuable.

8. It is the anxious wish of the Rector to be particularly careful with respect to the attendance of Communicants at the Table of the Lord, and in attention to their general conduct and course of life. He looks to the District Assistants to help him in this important part of his duty. A word in season from the Assistant to the Communicant may often be of great use, by keeping up the impression of the Sacramental resolutions in the moment of temptation. A special watchfulness should be exercised with respect to the Communicants; and that more unreserved manifestation of a brotherly and affectionate interest should be shewn, which draws forth confidence. The Lord's Supper is administered on the first Sunday in every month, and at the three great festivals of the Church. The absence of any of the Communicants from any one Sacrament should be noticed, and kindly inquired into; and immediate information of inconsistencies in their conduct should be confidentially conveyed to the minister.

III. The third class is—

“The promoting an effective use of all the opportunities of education.”

It is the Rector's earnest desire, that the time may come when every person in the parish may be able to read the words of salvation. To this end, the following means are established :—

1. *Sunday School.* This is the most important means of education, because it has a peculiar blessing, as being on the Lord's Day, for the Lord's service; because there is no legitimate excuse, but sickness, for not attending it—and because

it includes children of all ages. It opens at a quarter before nine o'clock in the morning, at the School-room; and at half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, when the children are catechised in the church. Young lads who go to work are divided into a separate class; and these attend at half-past nine o'clock in the morning at the church. Girls who are grown too old to remain in the Sunday School are separated into a class by themselves, which assembles at the School-room at nine o'clock. Thus all persons in the parish, from four years old to twenty, are afforded this opportunity of instruction; and none ought to be absent from it. The District Assistants are particularly requested to urge every suitable person to avail themselves of this advantage.

The attendance of the children and young persons on Sunday is occasionally deficient. Experience has shewn that this evil may be remedied by a persevering attention in kindly asking a reason for each day's non-attendance. To enable the District Assistants to be instrumental in remedying this, a list will be made out of all the names of the children absent from the Sunday School, living in each district. These will be sent to the Assistant on Monday, and it is hoped that each may generally find an opportunity, in the course of that week, of calling on the parent, and inquiring the cause of the child's absence.

2. *Infants' School.* This is daily, from nine o'clock till twelve in the morning, and from two o'clock till five in the afternoon. There are printed rules for this and the National School. The children may bring their dinners and remain all day, which makes the school an important relief to mothers. Children are admitted at two years old; there is no reason why every child in the parish, over that age, should not be in the school.

3. *National School.* Children pass from the Infants' School into the National School, or are at once admitted into it at



the age of six years. It is daily, at the same hours as the Infants' School. The minister of the parish is the appointed guardian of the public education, and is besides responsible for taking care that the little ones are suffered to come to Christ. He therefore recognises no other means of education than those which are under his own superintendence. He wishes this to be distinctly stated upon proper occasions.

The attendance requires the same watchfulness as that necessary for the Sunday School, and therefore a list of the children absent from these schools will be made out every Saturday, and given to the District Assistants on Monday morning, in the hope that they will enquire concerning each child in the following week. This will be found to add no trouble to the Sunday School absent list, as they will generally contain the same names.

The National School is examined every Friday afternoon, at two o'clock; and if the District Assistants could make it convenient to attend occasionally, they would have an opportunity of speaking afterwards to the parents respecting the improvement they observe in the children. This would manifest the liveliness of their interest in them.

4. *Adult School.* This is Sunday, and weekly. The Sunday Adult School is open both for men and women at nine o'clock in the morning, in the chancel of the church, and continues till church-time. The weekly Adult School is open for *men* on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at half-past six o'clock, in the School-room, from the 29th of September to the 25th of March: and for *women*, the same evenings, from the 25th of March to the 29th of September. The instruction is gratuitous, and without any restriction as to age or situation. The Assistants are earnestly requested to make use of every proper means, to induce all persons who are not able to read to take advantage of this instruction.

IV. The fourth class is—"The ascertaining the real state of their temporal distresses."

In speaking of this head the Rector will mention the different means there are of relieving the various wants of the people.

1. *In Sickness.* The District Assistants are requested to make known to the minister, as soon as they are aware that any person in the district is sick. The funds of the 'Friendly Help Society' are specially applicable to the relief of the poor in sickness, and the Sacramental offerings are added to those funds for that purpose.

There is a Lying-in Charity for poor married women in the parish, from which they get a bag of linen for the month.

2. Soup is given at the Rectory to about twenty families, in each week during the months of November, December, January, and February. This is mentioned, that the District Assistants may know that the Rector would thank them to state any particular case of need which requires to be attended to on these occasions; or, any particular case of bad conduct to be excluded.

3. *Fuel Fund.* Families are permitted to pay one penny, two-pence, or three-pence every week into the Fuel Fund, to which an addition is made; so that those who pay one penny, receive in the winter six bushels of coals; those who pay two-pence, receive twelve; and those who pay threepence, receive eighteen bushels. They have an order given to them to receive their coals in Winchester, in order that they may get their masters to convey them for them in return waggons. The District Assistants can recommend proper persons to be admitted to this advantage.

4. *Clothing Fund.* A similar advantage is offered, with respect to clothing, to persons paying one penny, two-pence, or three-pence weekly, for which similar recommendations may be made.

5. *Children's Penny Club.* The children in the National and Infants' Schools, have the privilege of paying one penny weekly, which is doubled at the end of the year, and given in clothing. A great many of the children avail themselves of this privilege, but some do not. As there are rules attached to this Penny Club, which has a direct and beneficial influence upon the attendance and conduct of the children, it is highly desirable that all the children should subscribe, as otherwise the influence does not extend to them. The District Assistants are therefore requested to recommend this Penny Club to the parents of such children as do not yet subscribe.

6. The gardens in the Glebe are a source of considerable benefit to the poor. Each person holds them under certain rules. The District Assistants are earnestly requested to exercise a special watchfulness over the conduct of the garden holders; and to mention any thing which it is fitting for the Rector to be acquainted with, as likely to influence him in continuing or withdrawing the advantage. The prospect of possessing a garden may likewise be held out to persons who are endeavouring to reform their characters, as a helping inducement to perseverance.

The Rector most earnestly entreats the District Assistants to endeavour constantly to overcome the difficulties of various kinds, which exist in the minds of many of the people, with respect to coming freely to communicate with their minister. He purposes to avail himself of their valuable assistance in directing his own communications to them, but the people should be urged to apply themselves to him. For this purpose, Wednesday evenings, before or after the lecture, or Thursday afternoons, immediately after the Cottage Readings at Sutton, would be most convenient: but as he greatly desires that a conviction of his accessibility should prevail amongst the people, he does not wish that these times should be so mentioned as to restrain the freeness of communication

which ought to exist, and therefore he wishes it to be known, that he is to be found generally at home in the morning before one o'clock, and in the evening after seven; and that he never turns away any one from his door unheard.

Having stated the particulars which lie before the District Assistants in the large field of usefulness upon which they so kindly enter, he does not wish it to be understood, that he expects that every person will be able to undertake the whole of the duty proposed. He will be thankful for the assistance afforded by the fulfilment of any part of these duties; but he hopes and expects, that whatever any person may desire to do, will be undertaken with an humble dependance upon the Divine blessing, and a persevering effort in seeking for that blessing by prayer.

### INSTRUCTIONS HOW TO FILL UP THE DISTRICT BOOK.

Two pages are occupied for the inhabitants of each house in the parish.

Every house is numbered, and the whole divided into Districts.

1. The first column describes the house itself—the name of the owner—the rent paid by the tenant—the condition of repair in which it is—and the size of the garden, whether large or small.

At the bottom of this column, the date of the last visit may be inserted.

2. Then follows the name of every individual in the house.

3. The several inhabitants are then numbered. Children, &c. who may occasionally reside in the house, but are usually absent in service, or otherwise, are inserted by name, but not numbered.

4. The relationship in which each person stands to the principal inhabitant is here inserted.

5. This column is for the age of each person, by inserting the year on which each was born; it is useful, where practicable, to add the birth-day, thus—1791, 29—3; for the 29th of March (third month) 1791.

6. This column states the occupation—who they work for (wf)—what are their earnings weekly (E).

7. The descriptive marks relating to the religious state of each person are here inserted.

8. And in this column those relating to general matters.

9. The Counter-book contains the names of all persons who do not avail themselves of the means of grace, or of education, which are suited to them; and this column is for an extract from the Counter-book of such portion as relates to the inhabitants of this house.

10. Such memoranda of time past, as it may be well to remember, are to be inserted here.

11. This space is for the current memoranda.

# **FORM OF DISTRICT ASSISTANT'S REPORT.**

**REPORT FOR THE MONTH OF**                      18 .                      **Dist. Assist.**

| District              | No. of Houses | No. of Inhabitants |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Families visited once |               | More than once     |
| Tracts lent           |               | New Readers        |

## **READ TO SICK OR AGED.**

| Name | Times | Reading |
|------|-------|---------|
|------|-------|---------|

## **SPECIAL CONVERSATIONS.**

| With whom | when | Subject |
|-----------|------|---------|
|-----------|------|---------|

## **TEXTS LEFT AFTER VISITS.**

| With whom | when | Text |
|-----------|------|------|
|-----------|------|------|

Sick Persons

Children of Age to be Baptized

Women about to be Confined

Alterations in District Book.

Transfers from Counter Book.

Remarks—with reference to particular cases—(specially concerning the effects of means of grace—impressions—conduct of Communicants—hindrances—oppositions—cases of difficulty or distress, &c. &c.)

**PASTORAL SUPERINTENDENCE.**

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**PART III.**

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**ITS SUPPORT,  
AS DRAWN FROM ARRANGED COMBINATIONS FOR  
INTERCESSORY PRAYER.**





I.

THE WONSTON PRIVATE-PRAYER UNION.

ORIGINAL ADDRESS, WITH THE FIRST EDITION.

It appears that the blessing of God has been vouchsafed, in a considerable measure, to the ministry of the Word, in the parish of Wonston, for some years past. A progress has been made in religious things, both outwardly in profession, and, it is to be hoped, also inwardly in the spirit, which calls for much thankfulness, and ought to afford much encouragement; but this very progress, by the increase of light, of knowledge, and of grace which produces it, tends to distinguish more clearly the darkness beyond it; and to shew more plainly how much there is yet to be done. The following is a short general view of the state of things, at the end of the first seven years of the present Rector's ministry.

The population is about seven hundred and forty souls; of which about four hundred are above sixteen years of age. Of these, two hundred and one are communicants; a large proportion of whom are giving satisfactory evidence of sincerity, by consistency; while there is not one whose conduct would make it desirable that separation from Communion should take place.

The attendance on the means of grace may be called satisfactory—the Sunday morning congregation consisting of about three hundred persons, including children; and very few, except professed Dissenters, absenting themselves entirely from church.

The attendance at the Schools is satisfactory and regular (except so far as concerns the lad's class); and the progress made by the children is such as manifests a real advancement in knowledge.

The use of the press which has been established in the Parish has been attended with very important results. By means of the "Weekly Calendar"—the short addresses, called "The present truth"—and especially the "Text Papers," a degree of Scriptural knowledge, and a general interest in the work of the ministry have been excited amongst the people, so as to produce habits of thought and enquiry, beyond what could have been expected. The publication and circulation of the "Cottager's Guide to the New Testament" have been found to assist in promoting these habits.

Besides this, there has been a continual, though gradual, infusion of Church principles into the minds of the parishioners, along with the main object of the ministry. A certain degree of ecclesiastical discipline has been put into practice in a very beneficial manner, and with scarcely any difficulty. The administration of the Sacrament of Baptism, strictly according to the requirements of the church, has been made the means of obtaining such an understanding of church-membership, as has evidently produced the wholesome result of an intelligent attention to the subject. None but Communicants are admitted as sponsors; and all the sponsors are occasionally called together, as a body of office-bearers in the church, to be instructed in their duties, and to be urged to the performance of them. Two seasons of Confirmation have been greatly blessed to the people.

This is a brief sketch of the outline of that general state of things, which forms both the materials and the expectation of better things in future.

But there remains much to be done. Many persons continue uninfluenced, even in external things by the means

of grace and of instruction. Some persons continue openly sinning, with a high hand—some it is to be feared, are led to make an insincere profession—and there are but few in whom the seed brings forth an hundred-fold. A greater earnestness—a more impressive unction is wanting;—a deeper, and more solemn tone of spirituality—more persons under the decided influence of spiritual affections.

One point which is of the greatest importance is, that the infirmities and insufficiency of the minister may perhaps form a serious hindrance to such a spiritual revival of the work of the Spirit in the hearts of the people, as is to be desired.

Since the beginning of the present Rector's ministry, there has been a spirit of prayer amongst many of the flock; sometimes manifested with more, and sometimes with less of steadiness and power; and it seems probable that this is the point to which most attention is required. There are not wanting those amongst the flock, who lift up their hearts to the throne of grace, from time to time, with special petitions for a blessing on the work; and an unusual number of valuable friends have been raised around the minister, who have willingly promised to plead for him, and for his people, in prayer. He gratefully acknowledges this affectionate kindness; and depending with confidence upon their sincere intentions of fulfilling these promises, he loves to ascribe to the instrumentality of their prayers, (the Spirit of Christ helping their infirmities) much of that measure of success which has been already vouchsafed from on high. A full reliance upon the sincerity of these friendly intentions, joined to an experimental conviction of the weakness of our warmest spiritual desires, (especially in the exercise of the difficult duty of prayer, and under the disadvantage of absence from the scene in which we are interested, and of surrounding occupation unconnected with it) has induced the Rector of Wonston

to organize a kind of machinery, by which the affectionate interest of his spiritual friends may be the more easily directed and continued in the channel of prayer.

The great promises which are given to united prayer, and the great comfort which is enjoyed by the Christian heart, under a sense of union with others in prayer for the same object, do not necessarily require that the persons praying should always be present together. A oneness of faith in the same Saviour—a sense of possessing and exercising the same privilege of access—a conviction of being actuated by the same Spirit—a sympathy of affection for the same individual—an earnest desire for the same spiritual object connected with such a one—all these existing in persons, who perhaps have never seen each other in the flesh, yet form a bond of union especially fitted for prayer; and it may be humbly hoped that any two such, though they be not gathered together in bodily presence, may plead that gracious promise which Christ gave to His Church: “If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. xviii. 19.) Though absent from each other, or even unknown to one another, except in Christ, a band of Christians, so bound together, may well believe that they may be made the instruments by which the Spirit of Christ may please to procure the fulness of spiritual blessings upon any particular object, which they agree to bring before the throne of grace in prayer. Such an agreement, for such a purpose, is well calculated to strengthen faith: and however it may please God mysteriously to delay or withhold the direct answer to such prayer, its effect is at once produced in the strength, and courage, and hope, with which a minister so pleaded for, must go to that work which is the object of such prayer. Nor is the effect only beneficial to the object of such supplications. Each and every person engaged in such a service for another,

must feel, for himself, the force of such union in prayer, under the promises of God; and will derive additional strength, and courage, and hope, in those exercises of devotion which cannot be engaged in by any, without a spiritual benefit to the soul.

From sentiments such as these has originated '*The Wonston Private-Prayer Union*;' which is a union of persons, either living under the ministry of the Rector of Wonston, or feeling a friendly interest in him personally, though not otherwise connected with his ministry. This being the *foundation* of the Union, the *object* of it is to enjoy the privilege of united prayer for the purpose of seeking God's blessing upon his ministry, and upon each other: and the *means* of union is an understanding on the part of every member, that each will devote some portion of time in prayer for this object, on the morning of the first Sunday in every month, some time before the morning service of the Church.

To facilitate this plan, and as far as may be, to secure its being acted upon, the following arrangement is made.

#### ARRANGEMENT OF THE WONSTON PRIVATE-PRAYER UNION.

1. Each member of the Union seriously intends, by the help of God, to occupy some portion of time before church on the first Sunday in every month in private prayer for a blessing upon the ministry of the Gospel at Wonston—for the Rector, in his personal, domestic, and ministerial need—for the people—and for the members of the Union who are engaged in similar prayer at the same time.

2. If any member is hindered by circumstances from fulfilling this intention at the time appointed, the first proper opportunity afterwards shall be taken for the purpose.

3. If possible, the heads for prayer which are subjoined in

this book shall be used upon the occasion ; but if not, the general subjects there suggested shall form the outline of the prayer, as far as each member may be able to accommodate them.

4. The members are divided into two classes.—First, the ministerial members, who are all those who live under the ministry at Wonston : and, secondly, the friendly members, who are all those which join the union as personal friends of the minister, but do not live under his ministry.

5. The ministerial members will be supplied with all the parochial publications which issue from the Wonston Press ; and a copy of each shall be laid by for each of the friendly members, to be sent to them as occasions may serve, without incurring expense.

6. The Rector of Wonston on his part, seriously intends by the help of God, to occupy some portion of time, on the same Sunday morning, in prayer for the members of the Union generally ; and also, as far as time and circumstances may permit, more particularly for each.

Some persons purpose, with God's help, to pray for the same object *every* Sunday morning, before church time. This is a Christian kindness which is thankfully acknowledged, but is not asked, or expected of the members generally ; lest any should find that, by imposing such a duty upon themselves, it should become a burthen, and be neglected. A member who may happen to call the subject to mind on a Sunday morning may however be strengthened in lifting up the heart in prayer, by reflecting that there are others engaged at the same time, for the same object. The first Sunday in the month is the only appointed season.

## UNION TEXTS FOR EACH OF THE APPOINTED PRAYER DAYS.

### FIRST SUNDAY IN JANUARY.

Acts xii. 5, 11, 12.

Peter therefore was kept in prison : but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him. . . .  
. . . And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark ; where many were gathered together praying.

### FIRST SUNDAY IN FEBRUARY.

Exodus xvii. 10—12.

So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek : and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed : and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy ; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon ; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side ; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

### FIRST SUNDAY IN MARCH.

2 Thessalonians iii. 1—5.

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you : and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men : for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord, touching you, that ye

both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN APRIL.

1 Thessalonians v. 23—25.

The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. Brethren, pray for us.

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN MAY.

1 Peter iv. 7, 8.

The end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves; for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN JUNE.

Matthew vi. 6.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN JULY.

1 John v. 14.

And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

#### FIRST SUNDAY IN AUGUST.

John xvi. 23, 24.

And in that day ye shall ask (in the original *enquire of*) me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask (*demand of*) the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked (*demanded*) nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.



## FIRST SUNDAY IN SEPTEMBER.

James i. 5—7.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not ; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

## FIRST SUNDAY IN OCTOBER.

Proverbs xviii. 24.

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly : and there is a friend, that sticketh closer than a brother.

## FIRST SUNDAY IN NOVEMBER.

Daniel ix. 20—23.

And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God ; yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth.

## FIRST SUNDAY IN DECEMBER.

Job xlii. 8, 10.

My servant Job shall pray for you : for him will I accept.  
 . . . . . And the Lord turned the captivity of Job,  
 when he prayed for his friends.

## HEADS FOR PRAYER :

*Suggested to the Members of the ' WONSTON PRIVATE-PRAYER UNION ;' with Texts of Scripture, which may help to direct the mind upon the subjects.*

These heads are more enlarged than may perhaps suit the convenience of some of the members ; but see No. 3 of the ' Arrangement.'

### I. FOR YOURSELF.

#### 1. Ask for the Holy Spirit to help you in prayer.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? Luke xi. 13.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Rom. viii. 26, 27.

#### 2. Ask for a sense of the privilege of approaching God acceptably, through Christ, by the Holy Spirit, on behalf of others in whom we are interested.

In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Eph. iii. 12.

#### 3. Ask for an humble and faithful spirit in prayer.

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Heb. x. 22.

Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble : thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause their ears to hear. Psalm x. 17.

#### 4. Ask for a lively interest with respect to the object for which you desire to pray.

The members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it ; or

one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.  
1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

And they came unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. Mark ii. 3—5.

## II. FOR THE PEOPLE.

1. Pray for a revival of the work of the Spirit, in the hearts of the people of Wonston.

O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy. Hab. iii. 2.

Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command me. Isa. xlv. 11.

2. Pray for a blessing upon the means of grace afforded at Wonston.

Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. Zech. iv. 6.

3. Pray that those who have already received the Spirit may be renewed daily, and become more fruitful.

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. John xv. 1, 2.

4. Pray that those who are beginning to feel the power of grace may be strengthened, and carried on from grace to grace.

Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Matt. xviii. 14.

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have

abundance : but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. Matt. xxv. 29.

5. Pray that those who are careless and formal may be awakened.

Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do. Acts ii. 32.

6. Pray that those who oppose the doctrine of the Gospel may be turned—their prejudices subdued—and their minds enlightened.

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. Jer. xxiii. 29.

7. Pray that those who live in open sin may be restrained, corrected, and brought to Christ.

For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Tit. iii. 3—7.

And such were some of you : but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Father forgive them; for they know not what they do. Luke xxiii. 34.

8. Pray that the discipline of the Church may be blessed, so that unity and order may prevail amongst the people.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Acts ii. 46, 47.

### III. FOR THE MINISTER.

1. Plead for him as for an infirm child of Adam, with many natural unfitnesses for the great work to which he is appointed.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. 2 Cor. iv. 7.

2. Plead the Divine appointment of the ministry, and his own call to it, as grounds for asking the help necessary to the fulfilment of the office.

And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? And he said, Certainly I will be with thee. Exod. iii. 11, 12.

3. Plead the success already vouchsafed in many instances to his ministry, as a similar ground.

They have heard that thou Lord art among this people, that thou art seen face to face, and that thy cloud standeth over them, and that thou goest before them, by day-time in a pillar of a cloud, and in a pillar of fire by night. Now if thou shalt kill all this people as one man, then the nations which have heard of the fame of thee will speak, saying, because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness. And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as thou hast spoken. Num. xiv. 14—17.

4. Pray that he may be kept humble under encouraging evidences of success, and be supported from fainting or depression under discouraging disappointments.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 2 Cor. xii. 7.

Lord, they have killed thy prophets; and digged down thy altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Rom. xi. 3, 4.

5. Confess for him such particular infirmities, errors, failings, or inconsistencies, as your private judgment may have led you to discover; and plead the blood of Christ for him.

If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. 1 John v. 16.

Exhort one another daily while it is called to-day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. iii. 13.

6. Consider his domestic circumstances, and bring them before the throne of grace, in their bearings upon his ministry, and upon his own soul.

A Prophet is not without honour, save in his own house. Matt. xiii. 7.

One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity, for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Eph. iv. 3.

7. Pray for his wife, and his children.

Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 1 Tim. iii. 11.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, it may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually. Job i. 5.

8. Ask that he may have time and opportunity for quiet self-examination, and communion with God; so that he may never be placed by outward things in the danger of neglecting to watch the motions of his own heart.

Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

Psalm iv. 4.

When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? Job xxiv. 29.

Lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. 1 Cor. ix. 27.

9. Pray for a spirit of power and of love, and of a sound mind for him, in the discharge of his ministerial duties.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God. 2 Tim. i. 7, 8.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Tim. iv. 5.

10. Pray that he may be blessed with a spirit of diligence.

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Matt. xxiv. 45, 46.

11. Pray that he may be specially directed and assisted in the preaching of the Word—the arrangements of the Text Papers, &c.—the employment of the press—the superintendence of the schools, &c.

Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man which is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old. Matt. xiii. 52.

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me, in your prayers to God for me. Rom. xv. 30.

12. Pray that he may be spiritually assisted in preparing and publishing the Cottager's Guide to the New Testament; and that it may be an instrument of extensive usefulness.

Write the vision and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. Hab. ii. 2.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Psalm cxxvi. 6.

#### IV. FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE UNION.

1. Pray for a spiritual blessing upon all the persons who are engaged in prayer for the same object.

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. i. 2, 3.

2. Pray that the Union may tend to an increase of Christian love in each.

Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels: and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Mal. iii. 16, 17.

3. Pray that it may be the means of strengthening each of the members in the spirit of prayer generally; and of increasing an experience of the comfort to be derived from devotional exercises.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God,



looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Jude 20, 21.

My prayer returned into mine own bosom. Psalm xxxvi. 13.

4. Pray that each member may be blessed with a spirit of faith in prayer; and a confident expectation of receiving the answer.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall receive them. Mark xi. 24.

I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Matt. xviii. 19.

5. Pray that none may grow weary nor decline in the work; but that it may be found so profitable, that each and all may be encouraged to continue.

Men ought always to pray and not to faint. Luke xviii. 1.

Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. Rev. iii. 2.

Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. Matt. xv. 28.

6. Pray that the minister, who is the object of the friendship of the members of the Union, may himself continually experience the power of a faithful spirit of prayer, on behalf of those in whose heart God has put the desire thus to help him.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me. Eph. vi. 18, 19.

Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you. 1 Sam. xii. 23.

## V. THANKSGIVING.

1. Offer thanksgiving for the many blessings which have already been given ; and the much success that has already been vouchsafed.

Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. 1 Sam. vii. 12.

I will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done it : and I will wait on thy name ; for it is good before thy saints. Psalm lii. 9.

2. Thankfully acknowledge the great and precious promises given to faithful prayers ; and the certain answer that will attend them.

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises ; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort ; who comforteth us in all tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 2 Cor. i. 3, 4.

## ADDRESS WITH THE SECOND EDITION.

It has pleased God to prosper the arrangement of the ' Weston Private-Prayer Union ' in a manner, which produces at once feelings of wonder, and of the liveliest gratitude, in the individual to whose mind it was suggested, and who forms the connecting link by which the members are bound together in the mutual exercise of Christian intercession. The number of the members is now 160 ; and Mr. Dallas sincerely believes that every one of them is alive to the power of spiritual prayer, and that each is sufficiently interested in the plan to insure (in the true spirit of it) a real fulfilment of that

"serious intention" of periodical prayer, which is the basis of the Union. Though it is well understood that none need consider themselves in bondage to this arrangement, and therefore occasional interruptions must happen in particular cases, yet there is reason to believe that such interruptions are rare exceptions to the general rule of the members; and that several, who found themselves interrupted in the beginning, have taken pains to be less so, in proportion as the personal benefit has been felt. Very frequent testimonies have been given by the members to the great assistance afforded to themselves by the devotional exercises to which they have been thus called, and by the comforting conviction, that they are joining with a large band to approach the throne of grace, to help a brother in the work of the ministry, to ask for a mutual blessing, and to receive their share of the blessing sought for by this Christian company of supplicants.

Every faithful heart must feel at once, that a blessing is sure to follow an arrangement so specially formed upon the gracious promises to union and agreement in prayer; and the blessing has evidently followed :—the personal and ministerial need of the Rector of Wonston has been supplied in a manner which leaves him no doubt, but that He who mercifully gave His favour to the plan, and has associated the prayerful and friendly hearts which form the Union, has also condescended to employ it as the means of furthering His kingdom, and of comforting His servant in the work He has set him about. To these prayers instrumentally may be attributed much gracious help, and many providential interferences which have been afforded; as well as the increase of devotional comfort generally amongst the members.

To all the members Mr. Dallas returns his most grateful acknowledgements; assuring them of the personal and earnestly affectionate interest, which prompts him to special detail of prayer concerning each. And he calls upon them to join

him in giving glory, and praise, and thanksgiving to the ever blessed Trinity, FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST, for the evidence of His tender love, manifested in the providential ordering of such a machinery of Christian affection, for the purpose of making it the means of dispensing His spiritual blessings more largely. 2 Cor. i. 11.

Mr. Dallas has, at different times, issued two addresses to the members, the second of which embodies the principal subjects of the first. As, to supply the 160 members, the edition of the Union Book first printed at Whitsuntide, 1836, has been entirely exhausted, it has become necessary to reprint it; and, in so doing, it seems advisable to reprint also the Second Address above referred to, which is accordingly sub-joined.

The difficulty of securing a daily reading of Scripture, for personal edification, must have been felt by all persons; particularly under circumstances of occasional interruption. Having often experienced this difficulty, Mr. Dallas has been for some time in the habit of reading a small portion of the Psalms, as an invariable rule every day, whatever larger portion of Scripture he may be able to add. For this purpose, he has divided the Psalms in such a manner, that the whole are read through in half the year; short portions being arranged for each day to suit the Calendar. This plan has been found to be very beneficial; and perhaps the benefit may be still further increased, by making these daily portions of the Psalms a means of uniting still more closely the members of the 'Winston Private-Prayer Union.' Mr. Dallas affectionately suggests to each of them the advantage of adopting the same plan, and using the same portion. The daily Scripture reading of each would then be a link of connexion with the Union; and produce a unity of thought and feeling between all the members. The thought that a course of Scriptural reading is carried on in company, before God, with

so large a band of sympathizing and prayerful friends, cannot but greatly increase the interest which will be felt in the subjects.

In order to enable each member to act upon this suggestion, "*The Calendar of the Psalms*" is added to this little volume, in the earnest hope that each member will make use of it habitually.

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. vi. 23.

Now unto him that is able to keep you, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy ;—to the only wise God and our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen. Jude 24, 25.

*Wonston Rectory, Dec. 1839.*

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### THE CIRCULAR ADDRESS

*Which was sent to all the Members of the 'Wonston Private-Prayer Union' at Whitsuntide, 1839.*

It is with no common earnestness of feeling that Mr. Dallas again addresses the members of the 'Wonston Private-Prayer Union,' at the conclusion of the third year of its formation. There are now 130 members; and from time to time, as opportunities have occurred, Mr. Dallas has received the most distinct assurances from many of them, both that they continue to act in conformity with the plan arranged, and also that they find it good to themselves personally to be so engaged. Several members have been forward in expressing their conviction that they have enjoyed spiritual benefits, and been strengthened in their Christian course, by partaking in the direct advantage of the prayers which they feel assured have been offered for themselves as members, while they have been endeavouring to ask for similar blessings upon their

fellow members. The confidential address put forth to the Union in the autumn of last year has been the means of drawing forth much expression of this feeling; and Mr. Dallas is therefore encouraged once more to give vent in a similar manner to the deep sense of gratitude which he continually experiences, when reflecting upon the spiritual help thus afforded to himself.

Mr. Dallas has no hesitation in declaring, that to the spiritual instrumentality which a merciful Saviour has been pleased to call into action, by putting it into the hearts of so many persons to concur in desiring to pray for him, he ascribes, under God, the very evident support with which he has been blessed. It is with the most unfeigned sense of weakness and personal need that he offers the expression of his heartfelt gratitude, first to Him who gives grace to make so many hearts willing to join in this work of brotherly love; and secondly, to each and all of those who are thus willing to help a brother forward in his course. He very highly values this exercise of Christian kindness. No one can duly appreciate the amount of the benefit conferred but himself, as none else can know the difficulties of inward infirmity and outward circumstances, against which he has been strengthened, in great measure, as he firmly believes, in answer to the prayers of the Union. He is sensibly affected by the tender compassion of the Saviour, in adapting the means of help so admirably to the infirmities of his own heart; and this feeling produces an earnest desire to be diligent himself in bringing the wants of his praying friends before the throne of grace. In order to assure them of this, he begs to repeat one passage of his former address.

“ Mr. Dallas takes the opportunity of assuring the members that he endeavours to fulfil his part in the arrangement, by bringing each of them monthly before the throne of grace, in earnest and gratefully affectionate prayer. He has found







that it would be impossible for him to satisfy his own heart and conscience, if he were to pray for these kind friends only in a general manner, on the morning of the first Sunday in each month ; and therefore, it is his custom to set apart the previous Saturday, (as much as circumstances will permit) as a day of special prayer, most commonly with fasting. Upon these occasions he goes through the whole list of the members, and prays for each circumstantially, as far as his knowledge of their circumstances extends. While he finds much personal comfort from this exercise, he is not without a faithful expectation that his prayers will not be in vain ; and he makes this statement to the members, in the hope that the mutual interchange of prayerful interest may be thereby increased to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the benefit of many souls."

In referring to this passage, Mr. Dallas invites every member, who may feel disposed to allow him the comfort of greater particularity in his prayers, to inform him from time to time of any special need which they may be able to confide to him in order that he may have the privilege of manifesting his gratitude by a more circumstantial pleading on their behalf, than an ordinary knowledge will permit. The members may be assured that every such communication will be received with real interest, and considered as strictly confidential. Mr. Dallas wishes the present address to be considered in that light by the members ; although, like the former one, it is printed to save the labour of copying.

Being well aware of the many personal circumstances which must occupy the minds of the members, and tend to increase the natural difficulty of calling to remembrance distant objects, however sincere our interest in them may be, Mr. Dallas has procured a small sketch of his Church, as seen from the Rectory garden, which he has had lithographed, in order to send a copy to each member of the Union. He

would consider it a favour if each member would place the accompanying little picture in a position where it might frequently catch the eye, and help to bring to mind the engagements by which the Union is formed.

May the Spirit of God abundantly bless all the members with grace, mercy, and peace, to the glory of the name of Jesus Christ.

*Wonston Rectory, 19 May, 1839, Whitsunday.*

### A CALENDAR OF THE PSALMS;

*In which they are arranged in Daily Portions ; so that the whole may be read between the 1st of January and the 30th of June ; and between the 1st of July and the 31st of December, in every Year.*

These . . . searched the Scriptures daily.—Acts xvii. 11.

Day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God.—Neh. viii. 18.

Give us day by day our daily bread.—Luke xi. 3.

Every day will I bless thee.—Psalm cxlv. 2.

*(Persons who desire to use this Calendar would find it convenient to mark the several daily portions in the margins of their Bibles.)*

| JAN. | PSALM.        | JULY. | FEB. | PSALM.         | AUG. |
|------|---------------|-------|------|----------------|------|
| 1    | i.            | 1     | 1    | { xxxi. 1—14.  | 1    |
| 2    | ii.           | 2     |      | { xxxi. 15—24. | 2    |
| 3    | iii.          | 3     | 2    | xxxii.         | 3    |
| 4    | iv.           | 4     | 3    | xxxiii.        | 4    |
| 5    | v.            | 5     | 4    | xxxiv.         | 5    |
| 6    | vi.           | 6     | 5    | xxxv.          | 6    |
| 7    | vii.          | 7     | 6    | xxxvi.         | 7    |
| 8    | viii.         | 8     | 7    | xxxvii. 1—17.  | 8    |
| 9    | ix.           | 9     | 8    | xxxvii. 18—40. | 9    |
| 10   | x.            | 10    | 9    | xxxviii.       | 10   |
| 11   | xi.           | 11    | 10   | xxxix.         | 11   |
| 12   | xii.          | 12    | 11   | xl.            | 12   |
| 13   | xiii.         | 13    | 12   | xli.           | 13   |
| 14   | xiv.          | 14    | 13   | xlif.          | 14   |
| 15   | xv.           | 15    | 14   | xlili.         | 15   |
| 16   | xvi.          | 16    | 15   | xliv.          | 16   |
| 17   | xvii.         | 17    | 16   | xlvi.          | 17   |
| 18   | xviii. 1—29.  | 18    | 17   | xlvi.          | 18   |
| 19   | xviii. 30—50. | 19    | 18   | xlvi.          | 19   |
| 20   | xix.          | 20    | 19   | xlvi.          | 20   |
| 21   | xx.           | 21    | 20   | xlvi.          | 21   |

| JAN. | PSALM   | JULY | FEB.   | PSALM  | AUG. |
|------|---------|------|--------|--------|------|
| 22   | xxi.    | 22   | 21     | i.     | 22   |
| 23   | xxii.   | 23   | 22     | li.    | 23   |
| 24   | xxiii.  | 24   | 23     | lii.   | 24   |
| 25   | xxiv.   | 25   | 24     | liii.  | 25   |
| 26   | xxv.    | 26   | 25     | liv.   | 26   |
| 27   | xxvi.   | 27   | 26     | lv.    | 27   |
| 28   | xxvii.  | 28   | 27     | lvi.   | 28   |
| 29   | xxviii. | 29   | 28     | lvii.  | 29   |
| 30   | xxix.   | 30   | 29     | lviii. | 30   |
| 31   | xxx.    | 31   | 1 MAR. | lix.   | 31   |

| MARCH | PSALM           | SEPT. | APRIL | PSALM          | OCT. |
|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|----------------|------|
| 2     | lx.             | 1     | 1     | lxxxvi.        | 1    |
| 3     | lxi.            | 2     | 2     | lxxxvii.       | 2    |
| 4     | lxii.           | 3     | 3     | lxxxviii.      | 3    |
| 5     | lxiii.          | 4     | 4     | lxxxix. 1-26.  | 4    |
| 6     | lxiv.           | 5     | 5     | lxxxix. 27-52. | 5    |
| 7     | lxv.            | 6     | 6     | xc.            | 6    |
| 8     | lxvi.           | 7     | 7     | xcii.          | 7    |
| 9     | lxvii.          | 8     | 8     | xciii.         | 8    |
| 10    | lxviii. 1-19.   | 9     | 9     | xciv.          | 9    |
| 11    | lxviii. 20-35.  | 10    | 10    | xcv.           | 10   |
| 12    | lxix. 1-18.     | 11    | 11    | xcvi.          | 11   |
| 13    | lxix. 19-36.    | 12    | 12    | xcvii.         | 12   |
| 14    | lxx.            | 13    | 13    | xcviii.        | 13   |
| 15    | lxxi.           | 14    | 14    | xcix.          | 14   |
| 16    | lxxii.          | 15    | 15    | c.             | 15   |
| 17    | lxxiii.         | 16    | 16    | ci.            | 16   |
| 18    | lxxiv.          | 17    | 17    | cii. 1-12.     | 17   |
| 19    | lxxv.           | 18    | 18    | cii. 13-28.    | 18   |
| 20    | lxxvi.          | 19    | 19    | ciii.          | 19   |
| 21    | lxxvii.         | 20    | 20    | civ. 1-18.     | 20   |
| 22    | lxxviii. 1-24.  | 21    | 21    | civ. 19-35.    | 21   |
| 23    | lxxviii. 25-48. | 22    | 22    | cv. 1-22.      | 22   |
| 24    | lxxviii. 49-72. | 23    | 23    | cv. 23-45.     | 23   |
| 25    | lxxix.          | 24    | 24    | cvi. 1-23.     | 24   |
| 26    | lxxx.           | 25    | 25    | cvi. 24-48.    | 25   |
| 27    | lxxxi.          | 26    | 26    | cvi. 1-22.     | 26   |
| 28    | lxxxii.         | 27    | 27    | cvi. 23-43.    | 27   |
| 29    | lxxxiii.        | 28    | 28    | cviii.         | 28   |
| 30    | lxxxiv.         | 29    | 29    | cix.           | 29   |
| 31    | lxxxv.          | 30    | 30    | cx.            | 30   |

| MAY | PSALM   | NOV.     | JUNE | PSALM    | DEC. |
|-----|---------|----------|------|----------|------|
| 1   | cx.     | 1        | 1    | cxxi.    | 2    |
| 2   | cxii.   | 2        | 2    | cxix.    | 3    |
| 3   | cxiii.  | 3        | 3    | cxliii.  | 4    |
| 4   | cxiv.   | 4        | 4    | cxlii.   | 5    |
| 5   | cxv.    | 5        | 5    | cxli.    | 6    |
| 6   | cxvi.   | 6        | 6    | cxlviii. | 7    |
| 7   | cxvii.  | 7        | 7    | cxlvii.  | 8    |
| 8   | cxviii. | 8        | 8    | cxlv.    | 9    |
| 9   | cxix.   | 1—8.     | 9    | cxliii.  | 10   |
| 10  | cxix.   | 9—16.    | 10   | cxlii.   | 11   |
| 11  | "       | 17—24.   | 11   | cxli.    | 12   |
| 12  | "       | 25—32.   | 12   | cxliii.  | 13   |
| 13  | "       | 33—40.   | 13   | cxlii.   | 14   |
| 14  | "       | 41—48.   | 14   | cxli.    | 15   |
| 15  | "       | 49—56.   | 15   | cxliii.  | 16   |
| 16  | "       | 57—64.   | 16   | cxlii.   | 17   |
| 17  | "       | 65—72.   | 17   | cxli.    | 18   |
| 18  | "       | 73—80.   | 18   | cxliii.  | 19   |
| 19  | "       | 81—88.   | 19   | cxlii.   | 20   |
| 20  | "       | 89—96.   | 20   | cxli.    | 21   |
| 21  | "       | 97—104.  | 21   | cxliii.  | 22   |
| 22  | "       | 105—112. | 22   | cxlii.   | 23   |
| 23  | "       | 113—120. | 23   | cxli.    | 24   |
| 24  | "       | 121—128. | 24   | cxliii.  | 25   |
| 25  | "       | 129—136. | 25   | cxlii.   | 26   |
| 26  | "       | 137—144. | 26   | cxli.    | 27   |
| 27  | "       | 145—152. | 27   | cxliii.  | 28   |
| 28  | "       | 153—160. | 28   | cxlii.   | 29   |
| 29  | "       | 161—168. | 29   | cxli.    | 30   |
| 30  | "       | 169—176. | 30   | cxliii.  | 31   |
| 31  | cxix.   | Dec. 1   |      |          |      |

## II.

## MINISTERIAL PRAYER UNION.

THE undernamed Ministers of the Church of England, being deeply impressed with a sense of the benefits to be derived from united prayer for a special out-pouring of the Holy Ghost upon the ministry, desire to make an arrangement, by which they may avail themselves of the privilege of approaching the throne of grace unitedly, to seek that blessing, through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, more largely than they have heretofore done, or than the circumstances of locality and the calls of duty in their parishes will permit them to do. For this purpose they each agree to set apart one and the same hour of the same day in every week, at which to engage in reciprocal intercessory prayer, each for the others, and upon these occasions they will conform to the following plan:—

1. Each member of this 'Ministerial Prayer Union' will always endeavour so to arrange his engagements, that he may be uninterrupted at some fixed hour every Saturday, that the prayers of the whole may be put up simultaneously.

2. He will commence by reading the twenty-first chapter of St. John's Gospel, or some short and suitable portion of Scripture.

3. He will then take the list of the names of the clergymen uniting for this purpose, which shall be arranged alphabetically, and he will pray for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit upon each individually, his family, and his ministry, adapting the petitions to the peculiar need, trial, character, or circumstance of each. That this may be effected, the Union must consist of such ministers as are personally acquainted with each other; and the members will cultivate such a mutual

intercourse as may enable them to plead one for another, with a certain degree of personal interest and particular detail.

4. Afterwards it may be considered as a fitting opportunity for enlarging the sphere of affectionate intercession; and it is suggested that prayer for the same promised blessing should be continued in the following order: First, for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on such individual ministers, by name, as each member may hold in friendly esteem; exclusive of the members of the Union. Secondly, on all members of similar 'Ministerial Prayer Unions,' known or unknown. Thirdly, on all bishops, priests, and deacons of the Church to which we belong. And fourthly, on all the ministers and members of the universal Church of Christ.

The arrangement detailed above has been acted upon by several clergymen in one neighbourhood, and has been productive of mutual comfort; and, it is hoped also, of much real advantage to themselves, their families, and their flocks. It is found to be a powerful bond of union, and an excitement to affectionate interest. In times like the present, when the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church is so greatly needed, a blessing so especially promised, may be expected upon any arrangement which promotes a spiritual fellowship one with another—that true fellowship which is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. The plan of this 'Ministerial Prayer Union' is therefore made public, and circulated amongst the clergy of the Church of England, in the hope that, by God's grace, many of the brethren in the ministry may be led to adopt the same arrangement, and that thus the odour of the incense from many censers may often ascend at the same moment to the throne on high, and be offered as a sweet smelling savour by the Mediator of the covenant of salvation.

## III.

**GENERAL UNION FOR PRIVATE PRAYER.\***

It is suggested to the reader to consider whether those who join this 'Union for Private Prayer' may not thereby be assisting in communicating blessings to others and procuring blessings for themselves.

"My prayer returned into mine own bosom." — Psalm xxxv. 13.

Let all who consider this to be the case determine at once to be members of the Union; and let them be careful not to allow trifling matters to hinder their joining regularly, on every Saturday, in the spiritual assembling for this object, which a great number of Christians have already agreed upon.

**GENERAL UNION FOR PRIVATE PRAYER.**

While it is a plain and acknowledged duty to be earnest and frequent in prayer, for the great general blessings promised to the Church of Christ, it is to be feared that the infirmity of sincere Christians too often concurs with the engrossing nature of their personal necessities to produce much omission in this respect. This omission is equally confessed and regretted by a great number of persons, who, though they really desire to exercise the privilege of prayer for the wide-spreading mercies promised in the Word of God, frequently find that much time passes without their acting out this desire in a manner which satisfies the conscience. It is obvious that vast results might be expected from a real and persevering combination amongst the whole body of spiritual Christians, for the purpose of pleading (individually, but unitedly in one spirit) the promises of Christ to His Church,

\* This is published, as a separate Tract, by Messrs. Nisbet and Co., and upwards of 20,000 copies have already been called for.

in earnest supplication for their fulfilment; and it has been thought that, by the help of some systematic arrangement, much may be done towards the attainment of this object. When the mind is awakened to the conviction that a certain neglected duty ought to be fulfilled, means should be taken to render the general duty more specially definite, and insure its performance. Some attempts have already been made to apply this principle for the purpose of promoting the exercise of prayer; and these have been attended with a very encouraging measure of success. The yearly concert for prayer, proposed by the REV. J. H. STEWART, of Liverpool, has been acted upon to a great extent, and it will not be denied that a blessing has resulted from the plan. Many combinations have been formed amongst private Christians, who have pledged themselves to engage separately in prayer for special objects, or for particular persons; and the testimony of some who have joined such little bands of friends for prayer, is of the most encouraging nature, both as regards the general effect upon themselves, and the special answers they have received.

It is this view of the subject which has produced the formation of the 'General Union for Private-Prayer;' which is a voluntary combination of Christians, for the purpose of appointing to each a definite distinct occasion to engage, once in each week, in private prayer, for those objects which must be interesting to the whole Church of Christ, under the special encouragement which may legitimately be drawn from the assurance that a considerable number of other Christians are also privately engaged in the same way, at the same time. To this end, the essential point which unites the members is an understanding that, on a given day, each will, as far as in him lies, devote some portion of time (more or less, as circumstances may permit) to private prayer upon appointed subjects, concerning which there is a general agreement



amongst Christians. As a distinct *promise* of this kind has sometimes been found to burden the conscience, when its fulfilment may have been prevented, the professed intention is not stated in the form of a promise certainly to perform a future act; but the formation of a *present serious intention* to join in the prayers of the Union is all that is required; and this has been found in practice to answer the purpose of exciting to punctual conformity, without ensnaring the conscience into an uneasy and difficult bondage. The subjects for prayer are arranged under short heads, concerning each of which every member may enlarge privately, as much or as little as he may feel enabled and disposed; while unity of object on the main points being thus obtained, each may consider himself warranted in pleading that promise of our Lord, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."—Matt. xviii. 19.

#### REGULATIONS FOR THE MEMBERS.

1. Each member of the Union forms a serious intention, by the help of God, to occupy some portion of time during the course of Saturday in every week, in private prayer upon the subjects, the heads of which are arranged at the end of these Regulations; his circumstances and frame of mind permitting.

N.B.—The hour from seven to eight in the morning is suggested; but any member may adopt another, according to his circumstances.

2. If any member be hindered from fulfilling this intention on the day appointed, the first proper opportunity afterwards may be taken for the purpose, in order that the object be obtained some time in the course of the week; that is, before the return of the next Union Prayer-day.

## HEADS FOR PRAYER

*Agreed to be used by the Members of the General Union for Private-Prayer; together with some Texts of Scripture which may help to direct the mind upon the subjects.*

I. For an abundant gift of the Holy Spirit, and of His gracious influences.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?—Luke xi. 13.

Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.—Zech. iv. 6.

Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.—Acts ii. 38, 39.

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.—Matt. xxv. 29.

II. For the purity and unity of the Church of Christ.

Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.—Eph. v. 25—27.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.—John xvii. 11.

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.—John xvii. 15—17.

That they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us ; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which Thou gavest me I have given them ; that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one ; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.—John xvii. 21—23.

Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive ; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ : from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.—Eph. iv. 13—16.

III. For her Majesty the Queen, and all in authority under her : and for a blessing upon our country.

I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men ; for kings, and for all that are in authority ; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.—1 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water ; he turneth it whithersoever he will.—Prov. xxi. 1.

By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.—Prov. viii. 15, 16.

IV. That God would raise up in great numbers fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of His Church.

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.—Matt. ix. 38.

I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.—Jer. iii. 15.

Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent.—Rom. x. 13—15.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.—Eph. iv. 11, 12.

V. That a blessing may accompany the ministrations of the Word of God, in order that it may have free course, and be glorified.

Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.—2 Thess. iii. 1.

So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.—1 Cor. iii. 7.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.—Isaiah. lv. 10, 11.

Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.—Matt. xxviii. 20.

VI. For the propagation of the Gospel amongst the heathen.

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.—Psalm ii. 8.

Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers : and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy ; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles ; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles, in him shall the Gentiles trust.—Rom. xv. 8—12.

This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.—Matt. xxiv. 14.

VII. For the fulfilment of God's promises to his ancient people.

Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. . . .  
. . . God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew.  
—Rom xi. 1, 2.

Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved ; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob : for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.—Rom. xi. 25—27.

In that time shall the present be brought unto the Lord of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto ; a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion.—Isaiah xviii. 7.

Thus saith the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, and his maker, Ask me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of my hands command ye me.—Isaiah xlv. 11.

VIII. For a special blessing upon all the members of the Union.

Pray one for another.—James v. 16.

The Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends.—Job xlii. 10.

The members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.—1 Cor. xii. 25, 26.

#### IV.

### EXTRACT FROM A SERMON

*Preached in Wonston Church on the 21st of June, 1840,  
on the following Text.*

I EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.—1 Tim. ii. 1, 2. \*

In order clearly to understand this Scripture we must look at it with great care, and see how it is joined with the context. It is connected by a very little word; and a word which is very commonly passed over and forgotten. It is the word 'therefore.' If you use this word in your daily and com-

\* The Sermon is published by Messrs. Nisbet and Co., in a Tract entitled "The Warrant for Intercessory Prayer."

mon matters, it is always when you have a reason to give for the conduct you are pursuing. You say 'As you have done this, or that, or have been here, or there, *therefore*, I will do so and so.' You give your reason and then you say, *therefore*. You would not use this word if you had not some reason to give. And this little word 'therefore' is the link which connects the verses of our text with the former part, as with the reason for what is stated. The divisions into chapters, as you well know, are merely accidental. The first two verses of the first chapter are the address. Then the Apostle adds (verse 3 and 4) "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest *charge* some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying, which is in faith"—and then we find in italic type the words "*so do*;" which words are not in the original, but are merely put in by the translators. Then follows a parenthesis, in which Paul took up another subject, not directly connected with the subject he was writing upon; but which was brought to his mind, and he followed the thought out, so that it occupies from the fifth to the end of the seventeenth verse. (This is a manner of writing by no means uncommon in the Apostolic Scriptures; as you will find in the other Epistles of St. Paul.) Then in the eighteenth verse he takes up the subject again, and says, "this *charge* I commit unto thee," &c. What charge did he mean? and wherefore did he commit it to Timothy? Why the charge which he had been giving when he took up the subject contained in the parenthesis. Read the verses together, omitting the parenthesis, and you will see the matter of the charge—Timothy was to "*charge* some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith;—verse 18, "This *charge* I commit unto thee, son

Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." Now comes the immediate connexion with the text, verses 19, 20. "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck; of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." And then he goes on, without breaking off at all, "I exhort *therefore*, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." (Chap. ii. ver. 1.) *Wherefore* did he exhort this? Because the Apostle had left a minister to preach to and watch over Christ's people; and yet some of those same people had resisted and stifled their consciences by giving way to sin; and thus had put away the simplicity and purity of their faith, and lost their souls—made shipwreck of them! He then mentions two such unhappy persons, Hymeneus and Alexander, whom he had been compelled to excommunicate, cutting them off from the body of Christ's people, forbidding them to come to the Table of the Lord; and this he calls "delivering them to Satan"—giving them up to the devil—sending them back to the world to which they originally belonged. Are you aware that when any person is forbidden the Communion of the Church, it is what the Scripture calls giving them up to Satan? There are but two sorts of people on earth, the Church and the world; and the world is under the power and rule of Satan, who is called the god of the world; and the Church are those persons who profess to renounce the devil. When any who have joined the Church of Christ give way openly to sin, and do the works of Satan, then the proper authority in the Church casts them out—cuts them off from Communion—sends them back again to the world, of which Satan is the prince. There were two persons, whom the Apostle mentions, who, after having joined the Church, had so terribly and



plainly given way to Satan, that he was obliged to excommunicate them, "that they might learn not to blaspheme." This then is the *wherefore*. "Therefore," this being the case, "I exhort that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made."

If you will think this subject fully out, you will see the importance of paying deep attention to the connexion of the text with the context. *Therefore*, because some have fallen from the faith, and men are in danger of making shipwreck of their souls, and of hardening their conscience, and of being necessarily cast back to the world,—"*therefore*," for that reason, says the Spirit of God in the text, I exhort that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." And then he mentions some men particularly for whom such prayers are to be offered—"For kings," and for all those that are in authority; or, as it is in the margin, "all in eminent places;" those who are high in station in the world; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." This, we might have thought, would have been a sufficient reason: but he gives another reason; and he joins it to the exhortation to prayer by another little word—the word "for." "*For* (he says in verse 3) this (intercessory prayer) is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." And why is it so? Because our Saviour desires *all men* to be saved:—"who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth;" therefore it is a good thing that Christians should pray for all men.

I have endeavoured very briefly to state this, merely that you may connect the various links in the chain, and see the truth of what I have now put before you. And if you examine the whole passage for yourselves, with prayer for the Holy Spirit, you will see that it is one of the strongest expressions in the Scriptures to warrant us in asking spiritual blessings for other

persons, even when there seems to be nothing at all in themselves to encourage us in doing so, or to lead us to have a hope concerning them. This subject would be a very large one, if I were to attempt to enter fully upon it: I will therefore only bring before you two points. One is the object and power of intercessory prayer; and the other is the duty of special prayer on behalf of Rulers, and those in high stations amongst us.

The first point is the object and power of prayer for others. You may observe the matter of prayer for others here brought before us is not any temporal advantage whatever; but merely that they may come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. If you think because you have a kind feeling towards any person, and desire any temporal blessing or comfort for them, that this has any thing like the character of a Christian's intercessory prayer, as here brought before us, you are greatly mistaken. There are many passages of Scripture which encourage the Christian in praying for some temporal blessings for others; as for instance, that in James v. 14—16, "Pray one for another, that ye may be healed" &c. Although this be the case, yet in none of them is there such a special warrant to plead as in the passage now before us. The Lord Jesus Christ would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; *therefore* He requires that those who have come to the knowledge of the truth should use "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks" for others. This is the plain meaning; and we should mark the variety of the expressions used. It is not simply, pray one for another; but make "prayers, supplications, intercessions, and thanksgivings." There seems a sort of anxiety that the command should be rightly understood; for a variety of words are used, all of which describe the same thing, and each of which is so plain that we cannot mistake the meaning. What is the meaning? Why that

persons who are saved by being called to the knowledge of the truth—who have found out the love of Christ, and have believed what God has done for their salvation—should plead before God that which Christ has done, on behalf of others. When they see them sin they are to plead Christ's blood for them; when they see them in danger they are to supplicate for their preservation and protection; when they see them in affliction they are to pray for their sanctification by the Holy Ghost; when they find any thing hopeful in them, leading them to believe that some good work is going on in them, then they are to give thanks to God for them; and that too whether the persons themselves do the like or not. They are to bear their names before the throne of grace. I exhort, says the Apostle, that ye do this. There is a great power in the strength of the various expressions used in this verse. May God help us to feel the power, and to exercise it just as the Spirit makes it plain to each.

There is another part of this verse to be remarked. "I exhort therefore, that, *first of all*," &c. There is not a word in the Scripture that is not of some consequence. The Holy Ghost has written nothing in vain. What then is the object of these words "*first of all*" here? It is not merely that Paul begins his exhortation here; it is rather that intercessory prayer is the way for us to begin laying the foundation for a work of grace in the soul of others. This is oftentimes the beginning—the first step towards the salvation of a soul. Your conversion began far off, perhaps years before it took place, in the faithful prayer of some pious friend; or perhaps the prayer of some godly parent, before even you were born: as in the case of Hannah, who, by prayer, devoted Samuel to the Lord, before he was born. Even then has God begun working by his wonderful system of means, by stirring up a parent's heart to earnest prayer, and in His own good time He struck the spark of life in

the soul of the child ; for whom supplications, prayers and intercessions had been offered up years before.

I have mentioned a case in which the natural affections of the heart would urge forward the gracious desire. But let us take a case in which this is not so obvious. Multitudes of souls will stand saved before the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming, converted in heart by the Holy Ghost, and be with Him for ever in glory, for whom the Holy Ghost began the work of means perhaps long before their conversion. He took some persons, who were living in the active discharge of Christian duty, and who were prayerful in spirit; and he interested their hearts in some particular objects. They made prayers, and intercessions, and supplications, for the conversion of those respecting whom they were so interested. Here began the machinery which ended, through grace, in the saving of a soul.

If any of you have a desire to pray for spiritual blessings on any particular person—a longing of heart to see such a one brought to the knowledge of the truth—that desire, that prayer, is of God: carry it on through every difficulty and hindrance, for it may be the beginning of a work which shall finish in the salvation of that very soul—the object of your heart's desire.

Then again there may be another reason for the command "*first of all*" to make supplications, prayers, and intercessions, for all men. Do not make your attempts to turn their hearts—to convince them—to persuade them—to use any means with them, till you have *first* prayed for them. Do nothing till you have "*first of all*" poured out your earnest "*supplications, prayers, and intercessions,*" for them: then use all your means; but let prayer come "*first of all.*" Let parents act diligently in this way for their children; and ministers in the exercise of their ministry; and relatives and friends one for another. Are you anxious for any spiritual blessing to

another person? Is there any dear object over whom your heart yearns, and mourns, and for whose salvation you are longing? Is there? Ah! rather ask, Is there not? Then "I exhort you, first of all," pray, supplicate, intercede for them—Yes, do this, "FIRST OF ALL."

But let us observe the text again:—"for all men." Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, *for all men*? Does that mean all the men and women in the world—the whole mass of people upon earth?—Pray for them *all*? Let us consider this part of the text. At this moment there are not less than eight hundred millions of souls upon the earth.—Does it mean that we are to make supplications and prayers for all of these? The very greatness of the number seems to bewilder us. Many of you cannot, I am sure, conceive such a number; it is a stretch of generality infinitely beyond your minds to grasp. To pray for *all* men is commanded in the Bible, that we might know that we may pray for *any one* of them. If there be any one person towards whom we feel our hearts drawn out in desire for their real good, that person is one of the "all men," who, in this text, we are exhorted and encouraged to pray for. When some particular person, family, or class of people, are brought before our minds with an interest and a desire for their good, and we look to the Scriptures for a warrant to pray for them, we find this very text exhorting us to make prayers, &c. &c. "for all men." Here then is a warrant to pray for that very individual, or family, or class of people; for they are a part of the "all men."

Then again remember, that the God of the Bible is the God who formed man's heart; who knows also the affections of our hearts; and he is the God who made his precious promises of answering prayer, and gave this very exhortation. He knows what our affections desire, for he gave them to us for a good and holy purpose; though we alas! too often mar

the good designed in them, and turn it to evil. Yet he placed the affections in our hearts, if they be spiritual; and when there is any earthly tie, to whom our hearts are drawn, then is the opportunity given for obeying, in a particular manner, the general exhortation in the text. Thus, by the enlargement of Christians' affections, a multitude of individual objects are brought before the throne of grace; and the sum of the particulars makes up so large an amount in the general, that a vast proportion of "all men" may be even now the subjects of prayer, under the warrant of this text. Where is the christian heart that has not some such object of affection in some part of the world? And thus we see this very comprehensive warrant spreading its blessed power in drawing forth earnest "prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men," and it will continue to do so until God is pleased to accomplish the number of his elect, and hasten his kingdom, even by such means as this.

## V.

## EXTRACT FROM A TRACT

*Entitled "The Lord's Remembrancers." \**

THERE is a very remarkable command to be found in the sixty-second chapter of Isaiah's prophecy (verses 6 and 7.) It ought to have a powerful effect upon the mind. This effect is perhaps weakened in some degree in the English translation, in consequence of a choice being given of two expressions, one in the text, and the other in the margin; but it is generally acknowledged that the translation given in the margin might correctly stand alone, instead of being given as a choice to the reader:—"Ye that are the Lord's Remem-

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brancers, keep not silence, and give him no rest (or silence) till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

The doctrine to be collected from this command, is consistent with that gathered from the whole tenor of Scripture. It seems, however, that the very vastness of its extent, and the wonder of the position in which it places poor sinful beings such as we are, too often operate upon the mind so as to produce, if not a neglect of the privilege and power thus given, yet at least a very scanty exercise of them, as though we dare not stand where God is willing to place us. As this is frequently the case, it may be useful to present a simple and condensed view of the doctrine of *prayer*, as a means appointed of God for the purpose of bringing about the fulfilment of His own certain promises: or what may be called "The Scriptural Charter of the Lord's Remembrancers." To make this view a clear one, it must not be encumbered by the mist of argument; to be received with power it must be seen not as a reasonable doctrine, but as "a declaration of God's mind and will," about which we may argue if we like; but whether our argument bring us to one or to another conclusion, the power and privilege remains in the Holy Scriptures—*it is written*, and therefore sure; just as we receive indeed the rays of the sun through the medium of the atmosphere which surrounds us; but if our lower heavens be ever so beclouded, still the sun is in the height above, shining in its strength.

There are many things which the Almighty, having determined them to take place, is pleased to promise in His written Word. These promises He is sure, sooner or later, to perform. Some are contingent and conditional—some are fixed and defined—some relate to general matters—some to particular events. Whatever they may be, according to their different objects and ends, each and every one shall be ful-

filled. For wise and merciful purposes, however, He often delays the fulfilment of a promise; and "it seems as though he had forgotten it. By this means he brings about a state of circumstances in which He calls for the active interference of His people upon earth. He appoints to them the duty of putting Him in mind (so to speak) of His own promises by *prayer*, and thus the children of God upon earth become the "Lord's Remembrancers." Every promise in the Bible may be understood with that special requirement—"I will yet for this be inquired of;" and if there be put into the heart a desire to obtain anything which God has promised, such a desire is an appointment from above to the wonderful office of the "Lord's Remembrancer." The promise being an assurance of the determination of God to give the thing desired, urges us on to the constant work of prayerful reminding; and encourages the believer with the confidence of success; while the delay which takes place in the fulfilment of the promise tries and proves the faith of the Remembrancer; forces him to be watchful concerning the spirit and manner in which he brings the reminding to the throne of grace, and excites him to more earnestness of importunity. If any one should incline to grow faint and disheartened, the Divine Remembrancer—the Man Jesus Christ, the great High Priest and Mediator, stands at the right hand of the Father to strengthen and support from on high the weak and weary soul; and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, helps our infirmities within us: bidding us not cease our reminders at the throne of grace, but enabling us to continue instant in prayer, though it be with "groanings which cannot be uttered." (See Luke xi. 5—13; xviii. 1—8: John xvi. 23, 24: Rom. viii. 26, 27: Heb. xii. 1—3, 12.)

READER,—Are you one of the "Lord's Remembrancers?" Do you hesitate, or say no? What! is there no promise of God which you desire to have fulfilled? Yes, many, you



will answer. Then consider, that the desire in your heart to have one of God's promises fulfilled, is an appointment to be the "Lord's Remembrancer," and calls you to exercise the office of constantly reminding him, in earnest prayer, that His word is passed that he will perform the thing you desire.





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